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DEFENCE OF OPPOSITION

WITH RESPECT TO

THEIR CONDUCT

ON

IRISH AFFAIRS,

WITH

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

DEDICATED

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

C. J. FOX.

BY AN IRISH GENTLEMAN,

A MEMBER OF THE WHIG CLUB.

LONDON:

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TO THE

Right Hon. C. J. FOX.

SIR,

THE founding a commercial intercourſe between Great-Britain and Ireland, upon the baſis of mutual advantage, ſeems a meaſure ſo wiſe, and ſalutary in itſelf, and ſo promiſing in its conſequences, as naturally to excite a more than ordinary ſhare of the public attention.

The object has long had the warmeſt wiſhes of the beſt, and moſt exalted characters of both countries, and the moſt fervent prayers of every one not inſenſible of their welfare and happineſs; and it is with inexpreſſible pleaſure and ſatisfaction, they now behold it ripening, and nearly brought to a ſtate of maturity, by the foſtering hand of the preſent moſt excellent Miniſter, who, with his father's reſplendent virtues, moſt happily blends the wiſdom of age and experience.

A meaſure, Sir, that will at once do away all thoſe jealouſies that have ſo long filled the breaſt of Ireland—that muſt for ever attach her to Great-Britain—and make their intereſt one and the ſame, cannot but claim a very powerful ſupport from the repreſentatives of the people.

It is, therefore, with much ſurprize, the public hear, that you, and thoſe you are in the habit of voting with, (including your *new* friends) intend to give it every oppoſition in your power.

The

The *conſiſtency* of your conduct, in the line of politics, gives, at once, the flatteſt contradiction to ſo impudent and barefaced a calumny.

The following ſheets, however, will effectually put the matter out of doubt, and do you ample juſtice.

They are the faithful extracts of various ſpeeches delivered in Parliament by *you*, and *thoſe* you have the honor to act with, and will be found to contain the ſtrongeſt recommendations of the *very* meaſures, now under diſcuſſion, for eſtabliſhing a fair and equal trade between Great-Britain and Ireland.

You will pleaſe, therefore, to accept of them as the beſt, and moſt concluſive refutation of the charges brought againſt you, as from them, it is impoſſible, conſidering how very unlikely *you* are to be actuated by party views, that the miniſter can want *your* ſupport and aſſiſtance.

I have the honor to be,

SIR,

Your moſt devoted humble ſervant,

A MEMBER OF THE WHIG CLUB.

ST. ALBAN'S TAVERN,
March 19, 1785.

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HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Mr. SAWBRIDGE.

I Am againſt all monopolies of trade, and commercial interdictions; there is trade enough for every nation upon earth, *if all impolitic reſtrictions were repealed.* No nation, nor corporate body, nor individual, has a right to deprive another *of the benefits of manufactures, trade, and commerce.*

March 18, 1779*.

Mr. BURKE.

It is for the *intereſt* of Great Briain to throw open *even the woollen trade to Ireland*; and if it is not done now voluntarily, the French will ſoon oblige us to do it. *March* 18, 1779.

Lord BEAUCHAMP.

The language the noble Lord, (Earl of Hilſborough) uſed in the other Houſe of the late miniſters, (Lord North, &c.) clearly meant an equality of

 export

* The order of the day was for going into a committee on the importation of ſugars into Ireland, which was loſt on a diviſion, 62 to 58.

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export and import duties, cuſtoms, &c. an equality of trade, and conſequently of mutual advantage. *Nov.* 30, 1779.

Earl of UPPER OSSORY.

As an Iriſhman, and bound to Ireland by the ſtrongeſt ties of intereſt and affection, it might be fairly, and I will add, be truly preſumed, that I entertain the moſt ſincere wiſhes for her happineſs and proſperity; nay, I will ſay, that as an Engliſhman, it is my duty to do ſo, becauſe I am perſuaded, *that whatever promotes the trade and commerce of* Ireland, *will ultimately promote that of* Great Britain. *Dec.* 6, 1779.

Lord BEAUCHAMP.

That Ireland is in a diſtreſſed ſituation, no man within or without this Houſe will, I dare ſay, venture to deny; but I can never be perſuaded to think, that the miſeries which Ireland feels, and under which ſhe at preſent groans, can be fairly attributed to the preſent miniſtry; or indeed to any miniſtry within my remembrance. The grievance has not originated, at leaſt ſince the preſent reign, with any particular ſet of men in power, nor from any recent meaſures adopted in reſpect to that country. The cauſes are various, *but the prime ſource* of the diſtreſſes of that kingdom, *is the ſyſtem of our trade laws*, which lay *a reſtraint upon*

upon her commerce. I am convinced, that theſe reſtrictions ariſe from a very narrow, ſhort-ſighted policy, conceived in prejudice, and ſtrengthened by time; which, after more than a century, has been wrought, as it were, into the very conſtitution of this country.

For my own part, I think *the intereſt of both countries is inſeparable*, as their political connexion is indiſſoluble, and whoever endeavours to obſtruct either, *is no friend to his country*, that is, *he is ignorant of the true proſperity of both**.

Though enjoying a place under the Crown, my ſituation is not ſuch, as to entitle me to know what paſſes in his Majeſty's council; but I have heard in converſation, that the noble Lord on the ſame bench, (Lord *North*) in concert with the reſt of his Majeſty's ſervants, have agreed upon propoſitions, which are to be ſubmitted to this houſe. I am ignorant of their purport; but from what I heard fall from a noble Lord (Earl of Hilſborough) in the other houſe, the firſt day of the ſeſſion; to whom, both England, and Ireland, owe the higheſt obligations, it is ſuppoſed, *that Ireland will*

* As neither Lord *North*, Mr. *Fox*, nor Mr. *Burke*, can be thought *ignorant* of the true proſperity of both England and Ireland, according to Lord *Beauchamp*, neither of them *is a friend to his country*; and they will hardly have the ill manners to contradict a noble Lord they ſo cordially act with.

be granted an equal trade, or an equality of trade, upon the broad baſis, of impartiality and juſtice.

Dec. 6, 1779.

Mr. BURKE.

Ireland ſpurns at the Britiſh claim of dominion: ſhe looks upon herſelf *free and independent*, and is firmly determined to maintain it. The American war originated in injuſtice, has been conducted with cruelty, and is likely to end in infamy, diſgrace, and diſappointment. The loyalty of the people of Ireland can no more procure juſtice at the hands of miniſters, than the ſtubborn ſpirit of America. Ireland, driven to the laſt ſtage of human miſery and diſtreſs, is left to her wretched fate; ſhe intreats—ſhe ſupplicates—but in vain. Without a pretence of offence on her part, ſhe is left to her fate, unattended to, and unpitied!

Ireland now will not be ſatisfied *with any thing ſhort of a free trade*. The people of Ireland have reaſoned fairly and juſtly: the colonies, they know, have been offered the moſt that their own moſt ſanguine expectations could aſpire to, a free trade with all the world. America, for her revolt, has had a choice of favours held out to her: This is the reward of rebellion. Ireland for her loyalty, for almoſt a century, and her forbearance under accumulated oppreſſion, and internal diſtreſſes, has been refuſed the mighty indulgence of importing her own ſugars; at all events, without taking

taking any peculiar merit with the Britiſh Government, for their loyal, faithful, and peaceable demeanor, they thought they were at leaſt entitled to meet the colonies upon equal terms, and with equal expectations of favor and relief to thoſe which America has ſpurned at with contempt.

I am induced, from every conſideration, which ſtrikes me, to believe, *that whatever meaſure will ſerve Ireland eſſentially, will, and muſt, in the end, ſerve England.* *Dec.* 6, 1779.

Mr. FOX.

It is the general calamities of the empire, that has made Ireland *poor*; but it is the incapacity and negligence of goverment, that has rendered her bold and daring. It is therefore incumbent upon parliament, to ſhew their fulleſt diſapprobation of that indolence and incapacity; and convince Ireland, that they are as ready as themſelves to reſent and puniſh the cruel and improper treatment, which they have received from miniſters. Ireland will ſee by ſuch a conduct, thas it is not this country, but its miniſters who are blameable, which will, in my opinion, prove the ſureſt means of once more binding both countries in the ſtrongeſt, and moſt indiſſoluble ties of friendſhip and affection. *Dec.* 6, 1779.

Lord

Lord NORTH.

Many favors have been granted to Ireland, ſince I have had the honour of a ſeat in his Majeſty's councils, ſuch as the free importation of beef and butter rendered perpetual; the encouragement given to the Newfoundland cod fiſhery; and the Southern whale fiſhery, by bounties granted by the Britiſh parliament; the giving leave to export woollen for clothing the troops on the Iriſh eſtabliſhment, ſerving out of that kingdom; the act for encouraging the culture of tobacco and hemp, by permitting its importation into Great Britain; the permiſſion of the export of ſeveral enumerated articles to the Britiſh ſugar colonies, and the coaſt of Africa, &c. Theſe favors, howſoever liberally given, have not anſwered, nor proved ſufficiently efficacious in removing the difficulties the people of Ireland labour under, *from the reſtrictions laid upon her trade*, nor *the diſtreſſes that are the conſequences of thoſe reſtrictions* What parliament may do, is not for me to foretell, nor dictate; but I preſume, they will come with the beſt diſpoſitions towards their brethren in Ireland, *and grant them every thing which does not apparently claſh with the eſſential intereſts of this kingdom.* *Dec.* 6, 1779.

Mr. WELBORE ELLIS.

Though a native of Ireland, I riſe as a member of this houſe, to give my opinion, relative to the intereſt

intereſt of my conſtituents, and am happy to find myſelf in a ſituation, when I can unite a ſtrict diſcharge of my duty with my native feelings. *The intereſt* of Great Britain and Ireland *are reciprocal and mutual.* *Dec.* 6, 1779.

Lord GEO. GERMAINE.

Perſons of great weight and ability in this kingdom have been conſulted on the ſubject of our differences with Ireland, but their opinions were ſo contradictory, that no certain information, or what would promiſe to give ſatisfaction, could be obtained, ſufficient to ground meaſures upon, and conſequently neither Miniſtry, nor Parliament could decide, *till a proper ſpecification was made by the People of Ireland*, through the only channel on which it could be relied on, or attended to. That ſpecification has been made; the Iriſh Parliament have come to an unanimous vote, *that nothing ſhort of a free trade would anſwer the object* which their preſent ſituation neceſſarily points to. The Iriſh Parliament has been explicit, *and I hope that their deſires will be granted**.

Dec. 6, 1779.

Lord NORTH.

I mean now to open my three propoſitions, relative to the allowing Ireland a free export of her

* Nothing can poſſibly be more agreeable to this, than the conduct obſerved by the preſent miniſter towards Ireland.

her wool, woollens, and wool flocks; a free exportation of glaſs, and of all kinds of glaſs manufactures; of a freedom of trade with the Britiſh plantations, on certain conditions, the baſis of which is to be *an equality of taxes and cuſtoms, upon an equal and unreſtrained trade.*

To demonſtrate the matter of right, as well as favour, I beg leave to ſtate the two following propoſitions: Firſt, *That Ireland has a free and unlimited right to trade with the whole world.* Secondly, That Ireland does not, nor cannot, pretend to claim any right, directly, or co-relatively, with any part of the Britiſh colonies, or plantations. Every perſon in both kingdoms, muſt inſtantly give an univerſal aſſent to the latter propoſition. It is not my wiſh to enter into a diſcuſſion of the former, or debate points merely ſpeculatively: ſo much, however, I will hazard, that mixing the broad claim of a free and unreſtrained trade, and qualifying it with the advantage derivable from a connection with Great-Britain, it will not be too much to ſay, that although the claim is with Ireland, the option of a connexion with this country, and a participation of commercial intereſt, *is clearly in favor of Great-Britain.*

It is both the intereſt, and inclination of Ireland, to ſtand well with England, and on the idea of ſuch a natural and political connexion; they have been rather harſhly and impolitically treated:

before

before the Reſtoration they enjoyed every commercial advantage and benefit in common with England.

The commerce, import and export, was held in common by both kingdoms till the reign of Charles the Second: even the act of navigation, the great foundation of our plantation laws, put England and Ireland upon exact terms of equality; nor was it till two years after that the firſt commercial reſtriction was laid on Ireland, and that not directly, but by a ſide wind, and by deductive interpretation. When the act firſt paſſed, there was a general governing clauſe, for giving bonds to perform the conditions of the act, but then the act was amended, in the fifteenth of Charles the Second: whence a concluſion was drawn, that the acts of the two preceding Parliaments, twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth of Charles the Second, were thereby repealed, though it was as clearly expreſſed in theſe acts, as it was poſſible for words to convey, that ſhips built in Ireland, *navigated with the people thereof*, were deemed Britiſh, and qualified to trade to and from the Britiſh plantations; and that ſhips built in Ireland, and navigated with his Majeſty's ſubjects of Ireland, *were entitled to the ſame abatements and privileges, to which importers and exporters of goods in Britiſh built ſhips were entitled by the book of rates.*

Upon an average of the ſix years, from 1766 to 1772, the export to Ireland was ſomething more than two millions; and in the ſucceeding ſix years,

ending in 1778, about as much more, one half nearly Britiſh manufacture or produce, the other half certificated articles, of which this country was the medium of conveyance; out of the native produce, which was ſomething more than 900,000l. per annum, on the average, only 200,000 were woollens: ſo that in this light, ſuppoſing every thing that any man could wiſh to conclude from the fact, I muſt ſubmit to the Houſe, whether it would be found policy to riſque *a million export* of native produce, for a woollen export of 200,000l.

The woollen manufacture muſt, indeed, a long time continue in a ſtate of infancy; and though cloths have been manufactured ſufficient to anſwer a conſiderable part of the home conſumption, yet it can hardly be expected that Ireland will be able to rival Great Britain at the foreign markets, when, after the expence of land carriage, freight, inſurance, factorage, &c. ſhe is able to underſell Ireland in her own markets on the very ſpot, though aided by the advantage of low wages and taxes.

Should the Iriſh be permitted to enjoy a free export of woollens, I ſhould ſtill be for continuing the bounties paid on the importation into England of certain ſpecies of fabrics of Iriſh Linens.

The ſubject demands much conſideration, and requires much modelling. It is a matter of infinite delicacy, and will call for a great deal of detail and enquiry, and therefore ought not to be hurried on.

Though

Though under different legiſlatures, Great-Britain and Ireland *have but one conjugal intereſt*; and are, in the general ſenſe of the phraſe, BUT ONE PEOPLE. Even ſhould ſhe (Ireland) be enabled to rival us in foreign markets, in a few commodities of native growth, cheapneſs of labour, and other incidental circumſtances, we ſhould not forget *that Ireland forms a part of the Britiſh Empire.*

Dec. 13, 1779.

Lord NORTH.

In one article of Importation, viz. *that of ſugar*, Ireland may probably ſtill chooſe to take them *circuitouſly* through England, at the low duties, in preference to *directly* importing them at the high duties. *Jan.* 24, 1780.

Mr. EDEN.

Will it not be expedient to anticipate the wiſhes of Ireland, and convince her of our ſincere intentions, to give her every ſecurity in our power for the permanency of her conſtitution, and of that trade which ſhe is ſo anxious to preſerve? *

April 18, 1782.

* On the 2d of February, 1785, the following Reſolutions were *unanimouſly* agreed to, viz. to allow the exporting, carrying or conveying *corn* out of this realm into Ireland; to admit *foreign hops* there; and to repeal the acts which take off *the drawbacks on Britiſh hops*; and for the Iriſh to be admitted *to the Turkey Company*, &c. No oppoſition was given to theſe Reſolutions, nor any debate had thereon.

Mr. FOX *.

The diſpoſition of the King's miniſters towards Ireland, I believe, is ſufficiently underſtood; and that diſpoſition, which they have expreſſed, *when out of office*, I ſincerely believe they will now maintain, and will take the ſpeedieſt and moſt likely means of giving *compleat ſatisfaction to the people of Ireland.*

I truſt in the candor of the Houſe, for the confidence which they will have in the intentions of his Majeſty's Miniſters towards Ireland; and that they will believe that they mean and wiſh moſt ardently to bring the matter forward in the moſt ſpeedy manner. I will again aſſure them, that it has always been my political ſentiment, that it is unjuſt and tyrannical to attempt to hold a country in ſubjection, and to govern againſt the will and opinion of the people. It has always been my ſentiments with regard to America, as well as Ireland, that they cannot, much leſs ought not to be governed by laws which they reject as unconſtitional. All juſt Government muſt conſiſt in the perfect conſent, good will, and opinion of the people; it is the beſt and ſureſt ſyſtem of Government where harmony prevails; and without it, it is not Government, but *uſurpation.*

It

* At this time one of his Majeſty's principal Secretaries of State.

It is certainly the moſt conſiſtent with true policy, as well as juſtice, to bring about a final ſettlement of the diſpute between Great Britain and Ireland; to ſtate, and preciſely to declare, *not for a moment*, but for ever, what is the relative ſituation of the two countries with reſpect to each other; to take in and conclude all the points of difference, and to eſtabliſh ſuch a *ſyſtem* of connexion, intimacy, and relation between them, as ſhall be immediately, and permanently, for the intereſt of both. To be ſettled for ages, and not, as has been the conduct of late miniſters, ſear up the wound for a moment, without compleating the cure. When thoſe miniſters agreed to the extenſion of the trade with Ireland, they ſhould have ultimately ſettled the claim, and fixed the ſituation. They failed to do this at the proper time, and they ought to anſwer for it to their country: *that meaſures however will be uſed for accompliſhing this deſirable end, I may ſafely aſſure the houſe.** I think that deceit is always pernicious, and I wiſh to ſpeak with as much openneſs, and information, as the nature of my office can juſtify.

April 8, 1782.

Mr. SHERIDAN.

The attack made by the Honourable Gentleman (Mr. Eden) on the new miniſters, is ſcandalouſly unfair

* What *but this*, is Mr. *Fox*, and his party, *now* oppoſing in the Houſe of Commons?—

unfair, *as I am convinced that they* * *have the faireſt intentions towards Ireland.* *April* 8, 1782.

Mr. FOX.

His Majeſty is moſt earneſtly deſirous of ſettling the diſcontents and jealouſies that ſubſiſt in the minds of his ſubjects of the kingdom of Ireland. The meaſures which his Majeſty's miniſters conceive neceſſary to be taken in the preſent inſtance, and which I am to propoſe to the Houſe, *will require a great deal of moſt ſerious diſcuſſion.* The Houſe will perceive, that in the pretenſions of the Iriſh, expreſſed by the parliament and people, that the matter contains no leſs than the conſtitution of the kingdom, that it comprehends not only the commercial rights, and privileges of the kingdom, but alſo the legiſlative power and royalty. The moſt important objects are therefore embraced, and both nations are moſt materially concerned, in the diſcuſſion and ſettlement of the matter: they are topics, upon which they will ſee his Majeſty cannot decide, without the aſſiſtance of his parliament; nor *indeed without the aſſiſtance and concurrence of both parliaments.* To come to the buſineſs therefore with propriety, and in a manner that will give effect to their proceedings, they muſt have full and authentic

* Meaning, no doubt, Lord *North*, Mr. *Fox*, &c.

authentic information; *and both parliaments muſt take time in their deliberation.** *April* 4, 1782.

Hon. Colonel FITZPATRICK.

I have been prevailed upon to accept of the office of the Secretary of the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, in the firm perſuaſion and confidence, that his *Majeſty's preſent miniſters*† are ſincere in their profeſſions; *and that* THEY *are earneſtly diſpoſed to make ſuch conceſſions to Ireland, as ſhall quiet their jealouſies, and give ſatisfaction to their minds.* If I had not had this opinion of the King's Miniſters, no circumſtance on earth ſhould have induced me to take a ſituation which at any time I would not have coveted, *and which only ſuch opinion and confidence would make me endure.* It is the wiſe policy of this country, to make thoſe conceſſions, as from the eſtabliſhment of a firm and friendly relation, founded upon clear, and known conſtitution, *the moſt happy conſequences will be derived to both countries.* *April* 9, 1782.

Mr. FOX.

Ireland, may perhaps think of freſh grievances, and riſe yearly in her demands; it is fit and proper therefore, that ſomething ſhould be now done towards eſtabliſhing on a firm and ſolid baſis, *the*

* Every poſſible information has been ſought after by the *preſent miniſter*, and time given *for the fulleſt deliberation* on the ſubject of Iriſh affairs.

† Lord *North*, Mr. *Fox*, &c.

the future connexion of the two kingdoms; but that is to be propoſed by me here in parliament; it will be the duty of the Crown to look to that; *the buſineſs may be firſt begun by his Majeſty's ſervants in Ireland* *; and if afterwards it ſhall be neceſſary to enter into a treaty, commiſſioners may be ſent from the Britiſh parliament or from the Crown, to enter upon it, and to bring the negotiation to a happy iſſue, by giving mutual ſatisfaction to both countries, and eſtabliſhing a treaty, which ſhall be ſanctified by the moſt ſolemn forms of the conſtitution of both countries.

I have no doubt, but that in affection, as well as in *intereſt*, Ireland and Great-Britain will be *but one people*. If any man ſhould entertain any gloomy ideas on the ſubject, let him look at the concluding paragraph of the Iriſh addreſſes; where he will find, that the Iriſh people and parliament *are filled with the moſt earneſt deſires to ſupport England*, to have the ſame enemy and the ſame friend; in a word, *to ſtand or fall with England*. Let gentlemen look forward to that happy period, when Ireland ſhall experience the bleſſings, *that attend freedom of trade and conſtitution*; when by the richneſs and fertility of her ſoil, the induſtry of her manufacturers, and the encreaſe of her population, ſhe ſhall become a powerful country; *then*

may

* Surely Mr. *Pitt* cannot but be conſidered as extremely fortunate, in having proceeded in a manner, *ſo ſtrongly recommended by Mr.* FOX.

may England look for powerful aſſiſtance in ſeamen to man her fleets, and ſoldiers to fight her battles.

England renouncing all right to legiſlate for Ireland, the latter will moſt cordially ſupport the former, as a friend whom ſhe loves; if this country, on the one hand, is to aſſume the power of making laws for Ireland, ſhe will only make an enemy inſtead of a friend; *for where there is a community of intereſt* *, and a mutual regard for thoſe intereſts, there the party whoſe intereſts are ſacrificed becomes an enemy.

Upon the whole, I am convinced that the Iriſh deſire nothing more ardently, *than proper grounds for being moſt cordially united to England*, and I am ſure that they will be attached to this country *even to bigotry*.

May 17, 1782.

General BURGOYNE.

I cannot prevail upon myſelf to give a ſilent vote; the great revolution that has been effected, with ſo much calmneſs and ſteadineſs, does the higheſt honour to Ireland; and I cannot expreſs myſelf better in praiſe of the characters who have effected it, upon the greateſt principles of freedom, than in the words of the Roman author, *eos qui de nihilo niſi libertate cogitant, dignos eſſe qui Romani fiant.* Thoſe who know how to think ſo juſtly of it, *deſerve to be free.*

May 17, 1782.

* Such a one as the *preſent* miniſter propoſes to eſtabliſh.

Lord BEAUCHAMP.

It is not the mere repeal of the 6 Geo. 1. that will ſatisfy Ireland, becauſe the repeal will leave the queſtion juſt as it was before. *May* 17, 1782.

Mr. BURKE.

It is not on ſuch a day as this, when there is not a difference of opinion*, that I will riſe to fight the battle of Ireland; *her cauſe is neareſt my heart*, and nothing gave me ſo much ſatisfaction, when I was firſt honoured with a ſeat in this Houſe, as it might be in my power, *ſome way or other, to be of ſervice to the country that gave me birth* †; and I have always ſaid to myſelf, that if ſuch an inſignificant member as I am, can ever be ſo fortunate as to render an eſſential ſervice to England, and that my ſovereign, or parliament, were going to reward me for it, I would ſay to them—*do ſomething for Ireland—do ſomething for my country, and I am over-rewarded*——I am a friend to my country, but gentlemen need not be jealous of that; for in being the

* Reſpecting the repeal of the 6 of Geo. 1.

† There ſurely then can be but little doubt of the miniſter's having Mr. *Burke's* ſupport in carrying his commercial regulations, between Great Britain and Ireland, through the Houſe.

the friend of Ireland, I deem myſelf of courſe the friend of England—*their intereſts are inſeparable.*

May 17, 1782.*

Mr. EDEN†.

It was wiſdom in the Iriſh Parliaament to chuſe an undefined expreſſion upon a ſubject ſo complicated and extenſive in all its connexions and conſequences; the whole conſideration is now opened to both kingdoms, *and it is the intereſt of both to come to an early kind of efficient concluſion*‡.

It is a political truth, that happineſs and ſtrength ſhould be extended *through the conſtituent parts of an Empire*, as far as wiſe and beneficial laws can operate to that effect. It would next be eaſy to ſhew, that public happineſs and ſtrength are diffuſed in proportion to the plenty and convenience with which not only the natural wants of a people are ſupplied, but ſuch adventitious ones as are ſuperinduced by univerſal habit and induſtry: when this end is not attained to a certain degree, an Empire

* Mr. *Fox* on this day moved, that it is the opinion of this committee (the Houſe being then in a committee) that the intereſts of Great Britain and Ireland *are inſeparable*, and that their connexion *ought to be founded on a ſolid and permanent baſis*, to which the committee agreed without a debate.

† See his letter, entitled, A Letter on the Repreſentations of Ireland, reſpecting a Free Trade.

‡ Page 140.

may indeed exiſt, and may encreaſe in numbers, but it will grow like an unwieldy body, liable to dangers and acute humours*.

Whatever may have been the ſyſtem of government adopted, or accepted by Ireland, the recent and moſt intereſting fact is, that ſhe now complains of ſome diſtreſſes which ſhe conceives to reſult from that ſyſtem. Theſe diſtreſſes are poſſibly no more than have reſulted from temporary cauſes;—from the late rebellion with the Colonies, or from the calamities incident to war; but we know perfectly, that the complaint is founded in real ſufferings. The firſt inference which would ariſe from this fact, in any mind reaſoning kindly towards a part of the Empire, and diſcreetly in reſpect of the whole, *is, that the Iriſh, as fellow ſubjects, are intitled to every relief compatible with the general intereſts*†.

If we were to ſtate to an Iriſh gentleman, the long continued poverty and idleneſs which have prevailed over ſo large a proportion of his countrymen, he would probably anſwer——

" All this may be true, but the monopolizing " ſpirit of our ſiſter kingdom is the cauſe of it: " that ſpirit exerciſing itſelf upon Ireland in a " very early ſtate of her civilization, nipped her dif-

* Page 142. † Page 143.

" diſpoſition to induſtry, and, indeed, made it im-
" poſſible for her to become induſtrious. In the
" very infancy of our country, and whilſt we were
" contenting ourſelves with the exportations and
" ſale of our cattle, you made an act * to pro-
" hibit thoſe exportations. We next gave our
" attention to the increaſe of our ſheep, in order
" to export wool, but you forthwith † prohibited
" the exportation of wool, and made it ſubject to
" forfeiture. We then endeavoured to employ
" and ſupport ourſelves by ſalting proviſions for
" ſale; but you immediately ‡ refuſed them ad-
" mittance into England, in order to encreaſe the
" rents of your lands, though you thereby en-
" creaſed the wages of your labourers. We next
" began a woollen manufacture; but it was no
" ſooner eſtabliſhed than deſtroyed; for you
" prohibited § the exportation of manufactured
" woollens to any other place than England and
" Wales, and this prohibition alone is reported to
" have forced twenty thouſand manufacturers out
" of the kingdom.

" The Navigation Act || had unwittingly, but
" kindly, permitted all commodities to be imported
" into Ireland, upon the ſame terms as into Eng-
" land: but by an act ** paſſed three years after-
" wards,

* 8 Eliz. ch. 3.
† 13 and 14 Car. II. ch. 18.
‡ 18 Car. II. ch. 2.
§ 10 and 11 Will. III. ch. 10.
|| 12 Car. II. ch. 10.
** 10 and 11 Will. III. ch. 12.

" wards, the exportation of any goods from Ire-
" land into any of the plantations was prohibited:
" and as if that had not ſufficiently crippled the
" benefits given by the Navigation Act, we were
" ſoon * afterwards forbid to import any of the
" enumerated commodities from the plantations
" into Ireland. This reſtriction too was much
" enforced by ſubſequent acts, and the liſt of enu-
" merated goods was much encreaſed. I ſay no-
" thing of your regulations reſpecting glaſs, hops,
" ſail-cloth, &c. † and other inferior barriers and
" obſtructions to our commerce: we ſubſiſted
" under all this, and under a drain alſo, which
" has gradually encreaſed upon us, by remittances
" to our own abſentees, Engliſh mortgages, Go-
" vernment annuitants, and other extra-commer-
" cial purpoſes, to the amount of half a million
" ſterling annually. And though we retained no
" rade but in linen, and proviſions, the latter has
" been under a three years prohibition, during
" which period we loſt the principal market for
" our own beef, though three-fourths of our peo-
" ple were graziers. Many of us, indeed, carried
" on a clandeſtine trade, and it was eſſential to
" our ſupport; but that too has been lately check-
" ed, firſt by the revolt of the colonies, and now
" by the war with France and Spain.

" Our

* 22 Car. II. ch. 18. † 15 Car. II. ch. 7.

" Our annual remittances and debts to Great-
" Britain now encreaſe with our diſtreſſes; our
" ſubſcriptions for loans have been lately filled
" from Great-Britain; our eſtates when ſold, are
" purchaſed by Engliſhmen; our leaſes, when
" they expire, are raiſed by abſentees; the drain
" is become greater than all our means can ſup-
" ply; our manufactures find little demand for
" their work; the farmers ſell their produce with
" difficulty; our land rents, indeed, are eſtimated at
" near three millions ſterling, but our land-holders
" will ſoon be obliged to reduce them. We allow
" that ſeveral of your reſtrictions upon us, have
" lately been much ſoftened, or modified, but the
" want of an annual profit in our intercourſe with
" Great Britain equal to our remittances ſtill pre-
" vails, and is every hour more felt. By the un-
" fortunate ſituation of the colonies, we have loſt
" even our old refuge in emigrations. After hav-
" ing for many years taken Britiſh manufactures,
" to the annual amount of *two millions* ſterling, we
" are for the preſent reduced to *non-importation*
" agreements *, as a meaſure, not of expediency,
" but

* It ought to have been anſwered, " We *(the Iriſh)*
" ſend more than that to England, with this difference,
" that the whole amount of ours, is the produce, or ma-
" nufacture of Ireland—the true ſource of the wealth of a
" country; while the half of Engliſh exports are of foreign
" produce—

" but of neceſſity. It would have ſuited the ge-
" neroſity of our feelings, and the affection which
" we bear towards you, to have made our repre-
" ſentations in better and more peaceable times;
" but you ſee that our circumſtances are urgent,
" *and that your recent indulgences are inſufficient.*
" *We deſire, therefore,* A FREE TRADE, *otherwiſe our*
" *diſtreſſes muſt, if poſſible, encreaſe, and the conveniency*
" *of our ports will continue of no more uſe to us,*
" *than a beautiful proſpect to a man ſhut up in a*
" *dungeon**."

Great-Britain loſes whenever Ireland is deprived of any reaſonable gain—and with reſpect to the ſituation of the latter for the weſtern navigation, we know that it is the intereſt of a dominion to carry on her commerce, from whatever corner ſhe can conduct it to the beſt advantage, and it would be thought a groſs abſurdity in the city of London, if, becauſe Briſtol is ſo ſituated as to have an advantage in the Iriſh trade, *the former ſhould deſire to have the port of the latter ſhut up.*

In all theſe reaſonings, the commercial and political intereſts, *are inſeparably blended.* When the liberty of commerce *is unequally enjoyed,* one part of an

" produce.—Non-importation would have raiſed in Ire-
" land—we take more than 1,000,000l. of their linens,
" and they take 3,000,000l. of our woollens—the two
" ſtaples."

* Page 146.

an empire may be in danger of becoming a burden to the other. An increaſe of ſupport in and of the common exertions, might, in courſe of time, reſult to Ireland from the advancement of her trade, and from the produce of duties, analogous to thoſe of Great-Britain.

It is ſometimes found, that a liberty to export manufactures, increaſes the produce of raw materials beyond the demand of the particular manufacture; and from the experience of the linen trade, it might be doubted whether leſs woollen yarn would be exported to Great-Britain by Ireland, if the export of manufactured woollens were leſs reſtrained; in which caſe, the ſmuggling of raw wool to the Continent of Europe might be checked *.

We are not, however, to proceed with that ſhort-ſighted wiſdom, which may enable us to ſhun the mere difficulty of a day; nor to act upon the ſpur of a moment †.

The Iriſh, though at all times, ſhe has had full liberty to manufacture goods for her own conſumption, the conſumers have hitherto found it eaſier to purchaſe from England, many articles, both of luxury and convenience, than to make them at home.

Amidſt the difficulties which time, and the foſtering attention of this country, alone can enable

* Page 160. † Page 163.

Ireland to overcome, it deſerves remark, that ſhe has little coal, is ill provided with wood, and is nearly without inland navigations. In ſhort, the conſtitution and eſtabliſhment of a flouriſhing empire, imply a well regulated order throughout the nation, a ſteady and effective police, habits of docility and induſtry, ſkill in manufactures, and large capitals in trade; all which can be the reſult only of a continued and gradual progreſs, aided by a combination of other favouring circumſtances *.

Colonel FITZPATRICK †.

I am anxious that ſatisfaction ſhould be given to the Iriſh nation, and that they ſhould learn, that this country is well diſpoſed *to give every neceſſary ſatisfaction.* This is particularly to be wiſhed, becauſe pains have been taken to ſpread ideas, that what has been done is not ſufficient for the ſecurity of Ireland, and ſurmiſes have been thrown out againſt the friends of order and reaſon, *who were convinced of the rectitude of the intentions of Britain.*

Dec. 19, 1782.

Mr. FOX.

I take the firſt moment to declare, that the intentions of thoſe Miniſters who ſent the repeal of the

* Page 166.

† Colonel Fitzpatrick begged leave to call the attention of Government to the circumſtance, which had given ſome blame to the people of Ireland, *the deciſion of an Iriſh cauſe in the Court of King's Bench in England.*

the Declaratory Act, *were thereby to make a complete, abſolute, and perpetual ſurrender of the Britiſh legiſlative and judicial ſupremacy over Ireland.* This *was the intention of Government* * ; and it is clear to the conviction, both of Miniſters and of the Gentlemen of Ireland, who intereſted themſelves in the buſineſs, that the manner in which this is done, is the beſt poſſible way, and the leaſt liable to exception. *Dec.* 19, 1782.

Lord BEAUCHAMP.

I have always underſtood it to be the privilege of a Member of Parliament, that when he has any particular buſineſs in the Houſe, it was not to be taken out of his hands *by another* †. This is a privilege I would never reſign ; a friend to *both* kingdoms, my only object is to ſecure *a laſting harmony* between Great-Britain and Ireland ; and if I ſhould be able to root out every remains of jealouſy, *my* great object will be accompliſhed, and I ſhall ſit down *the happieſt of men!*

E 2 *Dec.* 20, 1782.

* No one will ſurely diſpute Mr. *Fox*'s authority.

† This was occaſioned by Mr. *William Grenville* giving notice, that he ſhould move for a call of the Houſe, *at an earlier day* than the 22d of January (the day on which Lord Beauchamp moved the Call) when a motion would be made relative to Ireland.

Mr.

Mr. EDEN.

A diſſatisfaction has ſomehow ſince ariſen, but I ſtill continue to think, that it ought not to have ariſen, for it ſhewed, beyond a poſſible doubt *, not merely the good faith, but the induſtrious anxiety of England, *to gratify Ireland in the point of free legiſlation.*

I feel myſelf ever diſpoſed to think, and to ſpeak of Ireland with gratitude, with affection, and with reſpect; but I do not think her at this hour an object of fear to any nation under the Sun; ſhe neither has, nor will have her due importance in the great ſcale of the globe, till ſhe can be induced to think herſelf ſecure *in quitting politics, and purſuing commerce; it is my object and wiſh to forward for her that happy and important moment.*

Jan. 22, 1783.

Mr. FOX.

By the actual repeal of the 6 Geo. I. Great-Britain certainly, *and to all intents and purpoſes*, relinquiſhed *every ſhadow of juriſdiction, and ſupremacy.*

Jan. 22, 1783.

Mr. EDEN.

I relied on a treaty being opened † between the Parliaments of Great-Britain and Ireland, for the purpoſes

* Mr. Fox's propoſition on the 17th of May.

† Alluded for the addreſs of the 17th of May laſt.

purpoſes of arranging not only the points already ſpecified, but all the great queſtions involved in the future events of peace and war, foreign alliances, commercial treaties, limitation of armies, building and ſupport of navies. proportionable ſupplies, *with the whole immenſe detail under each of thoſe heads.* I ſhall then, *and not till then*, think that the connection is eſtabliſhed; and when the two kingdoms have thus realized and ſecured one conſtitution, one commerce, one King, one friend, one enemy, and one fate, it will become impoſſible for any man, *to wiſh the proſperity of the one country more ardently, or more earneſtly, than the proſperity of the other.* *Jan.* 22, 1783.

HOUSE

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Earl of HILSBOROUGH.

I WAS called by my Sovereign, from a private ſituation, to aſſiſt in his councils. I had formed my opinion, as an object of leading conſequence, reſpecting the ſtate of Ireland. I imparted my thoughts, my motives, and intended conduct, to thoſe with whom I am to act; *and upon the idea of a full confirmation, and ſupport of the Crown and its ſervants, I conſented to come into office.*

I wiſh not to be underſtood, as dictating any meaſures, or pledging myſelf for the reſult; what I mean is merely this, that ſuch and ſuch were my opinions; that they were approved of, and that I would wait with anxious ſuſpence, and chearfully abide the event, and in common with the reſt of his Majeſty's ſubjects, ſubmit to the ſenſe of Parliament; but if, on the other hand, as ſuggeſted as a general charge againſt Government, that the conditions on which I came into place, ſhould be violated, or departed from, or that a perfect good faith ſhould not be preſerved, the ſame motives which induced me to accept of the ſeals, a view to ſerve my country, *to cauſe relief to be given to Ireland.*

Ireland, and advance the intereſt and proſperity of every part of the Britiſh Empire, would point out to me the propriety of retiring again into a private ſtation; *when the end for which I left it* *, ſhall be found no longer attainable, or in other words, *when it will not be in my power to ſe :e my country.* *Nov.* 25, 1779 †.

Earl

* To procure, in conjunction with the reſt of the Miniſters of the Crown, ſuch relief for Ireland, as ſhe might be entitled to expect from Great-Britain.

† On the 11th May, 1779, the *late Marquis of Rockingham* moved an immediate conſideration of the diſtreſſed, and impoveriſhed ſtate of the kingdom of Ireland, and ſuch effectual meaſures as ſhould promote *the common ſtrength, wealth, and commerce of his Majeſty's ſubjects in Great-Britain and Ireland.*—After deſcribing the *private* as well as *public* diſtreſſes of Ireland, in the moſt feeling language, the noble Marquis proceeded to contraſt the deſerts of the Iriſh nation, whoſe loyalty kept pace with the extent and magnitude of the calamities they felt He inſtanced, in particular, their friendly and affectionate behaviour ſince the commencement of the American war; the zeal and fidelity of that kingdom, in the time of the two laſt Scotch rebellions; the uncommon efforts ſhe made during the late war, and her uniform loyalty, and attachment, to this country, in every trying exigency, when engaged in a foreign war.

He ſaid, he hoped, the importance of the object would ſtrike every noble Lord with the propriety, nay, the abſolute neceſſity of his motion, that the Houſe would treat it *with that temper, coolneſs, and moderation* which it ſo apparently

parently merited, and attend to it as a matter, in which every man in the nation was moſt deeply intereſted. He truſted, that their Lordſhips would not be led away *by any partial ideas or narrow diſtinctions of local benefit or advantage**, but meet it fairly as a queſtion of State, in which both kingdoms had an equal intereſt. He would be extremely ſorry, that this, or that town, or diſtrict, *that Mancheſter, or Glaſgow, or any other place, would ſupercede or render of non-effect the wiſdom of their Lordſhips' deliberations.* He wiſhed farther, that on the preſent occaſion, *all party or perſonal conſiderations would give way to the general good* †, and that as they all meant *the ſame thing*, the intereſts of both kingdoms, their Lordſhips' would not entertain a ſecound opinion on the ſubject. It was a great object, and ſhould neither be loſt, abandoned, or evaded; it had for ſome years been unfortunately too much neglected, but matters were at length arrived juſt at that critical ſtate, which would render it not only unwiſe and impolitic to loſe a moment, but would afford an inſtance of obſtinacy and want of feeling, *little ſhort of political inſanity.*

* The noble Marquis appears to be well aware *of the partial ideas, and narrow diſtinctions, of local benefit, or advantage,* that would probably *be ſtirred up againſt* the adjuſting ſuch a commercial intercourſe, as might be thought for the *reciprocal* benefit of both countries; and no doubt, the Houſe of Lords will be ſufficiently guarded againſt any thing of the kind, on the preſent occaſion.

† It is to be hoped that Mr. Fox, and his friends, will bear in mind the ſalutary advice and wholeſome admonition of the noble Marquis, whoſe virtues they ſo juſtly revered, and whoſe memory they hold ſo dear, and not ſuffer the real intereſt of Great-Britain and Ireland to give way *to party or perſonal conſiderations.*

Earl of HILSBOROUGH.

Previous to my acceptance of the ſeals, as Secretary of State, I deſired to know the intention of his Majeſty's Miniſters *(Lord North, &c.)* and the opinion of his Council, relative to future meaſures, reſpecting Ireland; and received every aſſurance from them, that Government was thoroughly diſpoſed to co-operate with Parliament, in giving to that kingdom, *ſuch an extenſion of trade as would put her on a footing with Great-Britain on the ſcale of commerce* *. *Dec.* 1, 1779 †.

* As the *memory* of Lord North, and his friends, are ſo apt to fail them, it is rather a *lucky* circumſtance for them, that it can be refreſhed by ſo reſpectable an authority.

† The late Marquis of Rockingham was ſo very ſenſible of the neceſſity there was for doing ſomething for effectually relieving the diſtreſſes of Ireland, and had the object ſo much at heart, that in the courſe of the debate on the 11th May, 1779, he repeated with ſome warmth, that Ireland had been cruelly and injuriouſly treated, and that it would preſent a mixture of folly and ingratitude, which nothing but the dulleſt obſtinacy and ignorance could explain, if we refuſe to lighten *thoſe intolerable burthens* which the reſtriction *of our trade laws* laid upon that *loyal, affectionate, and enduring people*. The *Duke of Beaufort*, though he poſſeſſed a conſiderable property in Ireland, ſaid he ſhould chearfully aſſiſt in any meaſure, for giving the Iriſh that ſpecies of relief which their ſituation demanded. *Lord Townſhend*, in expreſſions of the warmeſt affections for the people of Ireland, pleaded their diſtreſſes

ſorts in very forcible language; and ſaid, he ſhould

le

Earl GOWER.

I had the good fortune to unite the Houſe laſt Seſſion, upon the terms of the Addreſs to the Throne *. I was in hopes that ſomething *effectual*

 for

be wanting in the feelings which gratitude ought ever to inſpire, if he did not take the preſent opportunity of teſtifying his regard for them, and his earneſtneſs to procure them every degree of redreſs and indulgence, which their melancholy ſituation demanded, which juſtice dictated, and generoſity and national gratitude rendered a poſitive duty on the part of a great nation. He ſhould, in point of union and national ſtrength, *ever conſider England and Ireland as one country, and the people of each equally bound and connected by the ſame object, the proſperity of the whole.* The *Duke of Richmond* alſo in a very able ſpeech, endeavoured to ſhow, that all local diſtinctions were the creatures of prejudice and ſelfiſhneſs. He ſaid, that Ireland and England *were in fact the ſame nation and people*; that any diſtinction made in favour of the *latter*, was a piece of injuſtice to the *former*. A great, loyal, and a brave people, were nor to be ruined, beggared, or oppreſſed, becauſe Mancheſter thought *this*, or *this*, or *that country were alarmed.* All theſe petty motives muſt ceaſe to operate, nor be permitted to influence our public Councils, which ought never to loſe ſight of juſtice and ſound policy. He was for an union; but not an union of Legiſlature, *but an union of hearts, hands*, of *affections*, and *intereſts.*

* The Addreſs was as follows.—" That this Houſe " take into conſideration the diſtreſſed and impoveriſhed

" ſtate

for the relief of Ireland would have arifen *from the unanimous concurrence of their Lordſhips* in the amendment I then had the honour to propoſe †. If, however, nothing has been done, for the relief of that

" ſtate of the kingdom of Ireland, and being of opinion,
" that it is conſonant to juſtice and true policy to remove
" the cauſes of diſcontent by a redreſs of grievances, and,
" in order to demonſtrate the ſenſe which the Houſe en-
" tertains of the merits of that loyal and well deſerving
" nation, this Houſe doth think it highly expedient, that
" this important buſineſs ſhould be no longer neglected,
" and that an humble Addreſs be preſented to his Majeſty,
" That his Majeſty would be graciouſly pleaſed to take the
" matter into his moſt ſerious conſideration, and direct his
" Miniſter to prepare, and lay before Parliament ſuch par-
" ticulars relative to the trade and manufactures of Ireland,
" as may enable the national wiſdom to purſue effectual
" meaſures for promoting the common ſtrength, wealth,
" and commerce, of his Majeſty's ſubjects in both king-
" doms."

† The following is the *amended* addreſs which was carried *nem. con.* " That an humble addreſs be preſented to
" his Majeſty, that he will be pleaſed to take into his
" gracious conſideration, the diſtreſſed and impoveriſhed
" ſtate of the loyal and well-deſerving people of Ireland,
" and to direct an account to be laid before Parliament of
" ſuch particulars relative to the trade and manufactures of
" Ireland, as may enable the national wiſdom to purſue
" methods for promoting the common ſtrength, wealth
" and commerce, of his Majeſty's ſubjects in both king-
" doms."

that country, which I am pretty ſure is the caſe, I aſſure the Houſe, that I have done every thing in my power to keep my word, which I formerly pledged to the Houſe, and am ready to acknowledge, but I muſt add, in my own juſtification, that my efforts have proved totally unfruitful.

May 11, 1779*.

Earl of CARLISLE.

I riſe to expreſs my entire approbation of the motions †, and to bear my teſtimony to the zeal and loyalty

* His Lordſhip added, that he had, for ſome years, preſided at the Council Table, and had ſeen ſuch things paſs there, that no man of honour and conſcience, could any longer ſit there. The ſituation of Great Britain and Ireland required *ſincerity and activity of Council.* There is no doubt as to the cauſe of the noble Earl's diſguſt.—The miniſters (*Lord North*, &c.) had certainly pledged themſelves to do ſomething *effectual for the Relief of Ireland*, and none was given.

† " Firſt, That it is the opinion of this Houſe, that " the Act of 6th Geo. I. intituled, An Act for the better " ſecuring the dependency of Ireland upon the Crown of " Great Britain, ought to be repealed. Second, That " it is the opinion of this Houſe, That it is indiſpenſible " to the intereſt and happineſs of both countries, that the " connection between them ſhould be eſtabliſhed by mu- " tual conſent, upon a ſolid and permanent footing, and " that an humble addreſs be preſented to his Majeſty, that " his Majeſty will be graciouſly pleaſed, to take ſuch mea- " ſures

loyalty of the Iriſh, particularly of the honourable conduct of the Volunteers, and the liberal offers made of their ſervice, when Ireland was threatened with an attack. Had I been more perſuaded than I am, that Ireland had ever relinquiſhed its right of free legiſlation, which I know they neither have nor can give up, I ſhould ſtill have thought it wiſe to accede to their claim; becauſe I know, that from the gratitude and affection of the country, and the wiſdom of Parliament, much more advantage would ariſe to Great Britain, than by maintaining any offenſive and ill-founded pretenſions to a controul over them.

May 17, 1782.

Earl of HILSBOROUGH.

I hope, and believe, miniſters are ſincere in their good intentions towards Ireland. I am perſuaded, they have no other object with regard to this country, and to that, but to promote the intereſt of both; but perſons at a diſtance, *who are not ſo well convinced of their good intentions towards*

" ſures as his Majeſty in his Royal wiſdom ſhall think moſt " conducive to that important end. " Both motions were agreed to without a diviſion. Both the Reſolutions were moved by the Earl of Shelburne, and ſupported by the Earl of Carliſle, Lord Camden, Duke of Leinſter, Duke of Chandos, and Duke of Richmond.

wards Ireland *, may conſtrue every little delay into matter of ſuſpicion and alarm; and, therefore, I conceive, *I beſt ſhow myſelf the friend of government, by cautioning them of their danger.* *June* 3, 1783.

Duke of PORTLAND.

I always have been, and always ſhall be ready, to do every thing in my power to cement the connection between Great-Britain and Ireland, on terms of mutual affection and mutual intereſt.

April 24, 1783. †

* It is now three years ſince the noble Lord was promiſed by *Lord North*, &c. that relief ſhould be given to Ireland, and though none has ever been rendered, yet the noble Lord has ſtill ſo much faith in their aſſurances, *as to believe them ſincere in their intentions towards Ireland*, nay, for his Lordſhip's part, *he is perſuaded of it*, whatever perſons may think, *who are at a diſtance*, and may conſtrue every little delay *into matter of ſuſpicion and alarm.* —What will the noble Lord think then, ſhould this ſame *Lord North* be found to oppoſe the commercial intercourſe now eſtabliſhing between Great-Britain and Ireland?

† On the ſecond reading of the Iriſh Judicature Bill.

*** The public are reſpectfully informed, that the ſpeeches that ſhall be delivered by the Oppoſition, in the Lords and Commons, on Iriſh Affairs, will be faithfully *contraſted* with thoſe of the preſent publication.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

THE COMMERCIAL RESOLUTIONS OF THE IRISH PARLIAMENT, IN THEIR PRESENT SESSION, VINDICATED.

To which is added,

AN AUTHENTIC COPY OF THE RESOLUTIONS.

Abſtract of a Letter from a Member of the Britiſh Houſe of Commons, written ſoon after the late General Election to a Member of the Iriſh Houſe.

SIR,

May, 1784.

WHEN Ireland was dependent on Great Britain, it was wiſhed by ſeveral friends of both Countries to render dependence beneficial to her. Two bills were therefore brought into the Britiſh Parliament, one allowing to Ireland freedom of Exportation to our Colonies and Settlements, the other a like Freedom of Importation

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from thence, both denied to all Foreign Independent countries.

These were meant as experiments, upon a narrow scale, which, if found advantageous to Ireland without prejudicing Britain, might and ought to be extended further; were it for no other purpose than to preserve Irish dependence by the surest and only justifiable means.

The first Bill passed, but absurdly mutilated; and the little that remained of it was rendered useless by a still more absurd suppression of the second Bill, as an export-trade cannot subsist where imports are prohibited,

When Ireland became independent, with an unrestrained freedom of trade to all countries except Great Britain, I wished her friendship should be preserved by opening the Ports of Great Britain upon the same terms that open those of Ireland to Her, convinced as I then was and still am that the comparative magnitude of British Capitals, lowness of interest and superiority of skill, with all their necessary consequences, would, under an equality of duties, secure a continuance of the same advantages to Great Britain which she before invidiously possessed under an inequality which operated as a total Prohibition on her side of almost all manufactures except Linen, while she was treated in Ireland, *literally*, as the most favoured Nation in the scale of duties.

I am aware of the objection, that when Ireland becomes rich, those advantages will lessen with her increase and at length totally cease. But wealth, earned and employed in trade, will ever in a progressive state maintain at least the superiority it had gained: improvements of old manufactures and discoveries of new will more frequently appear, as they now do at Manchester, Birmingham, &c. &c. and Dublin growing *richer* in her progressive state, but advancing by slower paces, will become a better customer than *poor* Dublin ever was

But, be this as it may, independent Ireland will never be satisfied under the present inequality of duties. It is a badge of slavery which she never will patiently bear, and British Parliament alone has the means of removing it, by lowering the duties there to the Irish standard. The attempt now meditating in Ireland to increase them there in the article of woollens, supported by the most false asser-

tions

tions and moſt abſurd arguments, would, if it could ſucceed, certainly be fatal to Ireland, as it would ſoon be retaliated by England on linens and other articles, while multiplied reſtraints would at length end in a total prohibition of trade in both countries, ſuch as is only known in a ſtate of war; yet England even now is the beſt cuſtomer Ireland has, giving a longer credit than any other country can for what ſhe ſends, and paying quicker remittances for what ſhe receives: Two returns in a year upon the ſame capital, which double its profits, make one thouſand pounds virtually as much as two, where returns are made but once in the ſame ſpace of time.

You have here the thoughts of an old infirm man, who has bid farewell to all politicks, Engliſh and Iriſh: and who, though elected into this Parliament, is determined to vacate his ſeat; yet, if you think as I do upon this ſubject, and believe that the expedient will ſatisfy Ireland, I will defer the execution of my unalterable purpoſe, until I ſhall have had an early opportunity of throwing myſelf and my opinions upon the Houſe of Commons, as I have often done without hazard to the popularity of Miniſters, with whom I was connected, if my opinion were not reliſhed; and willing to give them all the merit if they were approved. In this ſpirit I now write to you and have the honour to be, &c. &c.

Purport of the Anſwer received to the above Letter.

"NOTHING but protecting duties, heavier upon "Merchandiſe imported from Great Britain than upon "Iriſh Merchandiſe imported there, will ſatisfy Ireland."

WHILE a ſyſtem of duties ſeemed to be thus inſiſted upon by Ireland, not equalized by the value of ſimilar articles in commerce, as is the univerſal rule of Tariffs between all Independent States: while in that ſyſtem allowances were claimed for the inferior abilities of Ireland

to ſupply Great Britain to purchaſe from her the ſame articles at the ſame rates, impoſſible to be proportioned ſo as to form a fair ſtandard of Trade; and while theſe arbitrary conditions were to be impoſed by threats and violence proceeding to overt acts of cruel Barbariſm, no friend of both countries would inſult Great Britain by offering propoſitions to her Parliament which if accepted there, would be reprobated and ſpurned by the Iriſh Parliament, the whole Nation applauding their conduct.

Thus circumſtanced I retired in deſpair, and if the Miniſters of Great Britain had then introduced any accommodating propoſitions here, in the firſt inſtance, they, inſtead of aſſerting the dignity of their country by inſiſting upon that precedence, would have tarniſhed and debaſed it: Thoſe who are in the wrong ſhould firſt make conceſſions; or if, as happily was the fact in Ireland, faction, ignorance and frenzy, did not ſpeak the ſentiments of the people, it behoved the honour and fidelity of their repreſentatives to declare the difference, by offering a plan to the ſiſter Kingdom ſupported, and only ſupported by Equality, Juſtice and mutual Intereſt.

But if, having thus acted, the Britiſh Parliament ſhould again be influenced, as it was in the two Bills already mentioned, by the miſtaken intereſt of narrow minded men againſt one common univerſal intereſt the Iriſh Parliament, though without a proſpect of Ireland ever becoming the Emporium of trade, as was hyperbolically expreſſed in a late debate, would be the unrivall'd poſſeſſor of firmneſs, liberality, reaſon and juſtice.

Vilius argentum eſt auro, virtutibus aurum.

That an oppoſition here to the Reſolutions of the Iriſh Parliament proceeds from falſe conceptions, we ſhall now endeavour to prove by ſtating thoſe objections which have reached our knowledge; and giving the anſwers which have occured to us.

Objection 1ſt. If Ireland be permitted to export Sugars to Great Britain, ſhe will ſmuggle in for that purpoſe Foreign Sugars purchaſed at a lower price; and by theſe means underſel Britiſh Sugars at their own home market.

Anſwer. The Revenue of Ireland would then ſuffer doubly, firſt by being defrauded of the duty payable upon imported

imported Muſcavado Sugars, and again by paying upon their exportation a drawback of duties never received, or a premium when refined, more than an equivalent for thoſe duties. The Parliament and Government of Ireland will therefore be moſt importantly intereſted in preventing that practice.

Secondly, the Iriſh conſumption of Sugars is conſiderable, and is chiefly, if not intirely, of Sugars brought from Great Britain. Why then is not that conſumption now entirely ſupplied with ſmuggled Sugars? theſe would find a demand to a conſiderable amount, although the Britiſh Ports were, as they ſtill are, ſhut to Iriſh exportation.

Objection 2d. French, Dutch, Daniſh, &c. Sugars, will be entered as our Plantation Sugars, and, though they pay the ſame duties, they will be bought cheaper, and ſo circumſtanced will be exported to Britain entitled to a drawback there of the duties paid, or to a premium, as the caſe ſhall happen upon re-exportation.

Anſwer. The Iriſh Revenue will be no gainer by this traffick, and therefore the government will have no intereſt in conniving at it. Nor is the difference of price ſuch as to tempt the fraudulent Merchant to encounter the riſk of being diſcovered.

Objection 3d. Iriſh Merchants would be the ſole importers of Sugars into Ireland directly from the Britiſh Plantations.

Anſwer. This objection is the reverſe of the foregoing, but the ſecond anſwer is applicable to it: The Iriſh are at liberty now to import Sugars directly, to the full amount of Iriſh conſumption, yet ſmall have been the quantities ſo imported, ſince the freedom of a direct importation has been allowed to Ireland.

Objection 4th. Britiſh Merchants will tranſport themſelves and their capitals into Ireland.

Anſwer. Why is not this ſuppoſition verified by ſome inſtances now to be produced? They certainly will not ſend their capitals, and ſtay themſelves behind, truſting to the management of others. But inconvenient and diſagreeable as this removal would be to themſelves and their families, they would find it more difficult to procure ſugar-bakers to remove, and perſuade all the ſubordinate manufactures to accompany them. Yet ſhould this be

effected

effected, they cannot tranſport their ſugar-houſes, nor the materials of which they are built. They muſt be ſold here at the price of rubbiſh; for the buildings cannot be converted to new uſes; and the ſame is true of the utenſils. All theſe muſt again be provided in Ireland, when the adventurers arrive there, where it will be found, that coals, and many other articles neceſſary to the refining of ſugars, are dearer than in England.

But theſe are far from being all the diſadvantages to be encountered in Ireland: a credit of three years, uſually given to the planter by the merchant his creditor, muſt ſtill be continued, while the ſugar baker and refiner will require from the merchant a longer reſpite of payment than is allowed in England, where the ſhop-keeper, their cuſtomer, is ſooner and more punctually paid by the cuſtomer. Quick returns of ſmall profits, the life of trade, are only to be found in wealthy countries; and men ſo enriched, will hardly emigrate into poor countries, to meet with delay and diſappointments, not to be compenſated by cheapneſs of manual labour, or commodiouſneſs of ſituation.

But though mere manual labour, ſuch as is employed in delving and ditching, which require no ſkill, may be hired cheaper from a wretch in poverty and rags, it is much dearer and leſs valuable in every work of art, ſhortened in numberleſs inſtances by engines enabling one man to do more than many. A few years ſince, there was not a ſingle crane on the Quay of Cork.

The hiſtory of commerce rarely produces an inſtance of a wealthy trader going into a poor country to increaſe his wealth: but if cheapneſs of manual labour neceſſarily invited large capitals, no poor country would long continue poor; nor indeed any rich country long continue rich, mutually changing and rechanging conditions, as the price of ſuch labour ſunk or roſe. But though poverty emigrates, or ſtarves, wealth remains fixt to that ſoil where it grew; and flouriſhes in proportion as it ſpreads its roots deeper

deeper and wider there. Tranſplant an oak and it periſhes *.

What has been ſaid of cheap labour, is equally true of commodious ſituation. The richeſt mercantile towns in England have the worſt harbours: Milford ſcarcely contains a veſſel in its excellent haven, except paſſing to or from ſome other port, while the dry mud of Briſtol is crouded with ſhips detained there by many contrary winds, and expoſed to fire from the houſes but a few yards diſtant, after having made their way through a moſt perilous channel to the merchant's warehouſes. Were thoſe merchants aſked, why they do not remove to Milford Haven? and were the ſame queſtion propoſed to ſugar-bakers, glaſs-men, copper manufacturers, &c. &c. &c. their anſwer would be, a ſmile of contempt. Yet predictions much more impoſſible of emigrations to Dublin, Cork, Waterford, and Limerick, are gravely made, and anxiouſly liſtened to.

But if all we have ſaid were falſe, and Cork were to rival Briſtol, while London would be rivalled by Dublin in Weſt Indian imports, though the Britiſh merchant would then have a juſt cauſe for ſorrow and oppoſition, the Weſt India planters ſhould rejoice in a view of two markets inſtead of being confined to one.

This leads us to another objection.

Objection 5th. The Planter indebted to his factor in Britain, as moſt Planters confeſſedly are, would change hands and defraud his creditor by conſignments into Ireland.

Anſwer. This expedient though troubleſome and expenſive to the Creditor, would not leave him without a remedy, as the Planter's property in the Weſt Indies would be ſubject to his demand. It is reported that one or two attempts of this nature were made in England, but defeated.

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* England underſels Ireland at her own Markets with Cloth made of Iriſh Woollen Yarn, for which a duty is paid in Ireland upon exportation; and the difference of price is greater in proportion to the fineneſs of the Fabrick.

Nor

Nor has it, I believe, been heard that ſuch baſe policy was, in any inſtance, practiſed in ſupplying the conſumption of Ireland ever ſince a direct importation has been allowed there.

The Planters therefore need not be ſolicitous to refute ſo undeſerved a calumny, by uniting with the Britiſh Merchants. Nor is ſuch ſolicitude the real cauſe of an union clearly accounted for without admitting an infamous imputation upon any number of worthy, but generous men: moſt Planters are indebted to their Factors, and by conſequence are under their power and influence.

There are however many planters in opulent circumſtances, free from all reſtraint, who, though the adverti-ſing merchants would blend them in one general deſcription, will, no doubt, ſeparate and diſtinguiſh themſelves from their enthralled bretheren.

But, if what we have advanced upon this ſubject be well founded, the merchant requires no ſacrifice from the planters of their intereſt to his; his fears are as vain as thoſe of a North Britiſh member of Parliament were, when he foretold in a ſpeech againſt the importation of Iriſh live cattle into Britain, that, if it was permitted, an Ox would be as rare an animal in our fields as a Lion.

Objection 6th. When the ports of Great Britain ſhall be always open to the importation of grain and flour from Ireland, let the price be ever ſo low; immenſe quantities will be poured in from thence, detrimental to the Britiſh landlord and tenant.

Anſwer. The dry climate of South Britain is univerſally more favourable to harveſts, than that of rainy Ireland, and the ſame true of moſt parts of North Britain. Potatoes are therefore the general food of Ireland. Yet a great proportion of the comparatively ſmall quantity of grain and flour, conſumed there, was ſupplied by England, until a bounty was granted in Ireland upon exportation; and we believe that the balance, though not ſo great, is ſtill in favour of England.

Should there be, in an unuſual change of ſeaſons, a ſcarcity here when there is an abundance in Ireland, a ſupply from thence will be more to our advantage, than from any other country, and Iriſh cheapneſs will then be a common bleſſing to the ſiſter kingdoms.

But

But ſhould there be a ſuperfluity in both, Britain will preferably conſume her own grain and flour free from freight and hazard, which ſhe muſt pay for; nor will Ireland ſend her produce to an over-ſtocked market, while the World is open to her.

It is true that Scotland, in particular, is ſupplied with Iriſh oats and meal, in great quantities for her own conſumption. But it is alſo true that Scotch Merchants, and others in parts of South Britain, purchaſe more than is wanted for that purpoſe, immediately after harveſt, when the miſerable Iriſh tenant is obliged to threſh out his corn, for payment of rent in November to a diſtreſſed and relentleſs landlord. From hence it often happens that Iriſh corn is exported at a much lower price, ſometimes ſcarcely exceeding one half of what it afterwards bears, when brought back to drained and ſtarving Ireland.

But admitting that North Britain, chiefly concerned in this queſtion, ſhould ſometimes ſo abound with oats of her own growth, as to render a prohibition of importation advantegeous, which ſeldom happens even for a ſhort time, ſhe will at all other times be a gainer, by cheapneſs in Ireland.

Having vindicated, we hope, ſufficiently the Reſolutions of the Iriſh Parliament, we ſhall now take notice of an *objection* made by ſome of its members *to the 10th Article*, charged with granting a *tribute* annually payable to Britain, as if a ſmall contribution to the ſupport of a Maritime Force, neceſſary to the common protection of both countries, deſerved a degrading appellation; more eſpecially as the application of that ſupply to any ſpecifick naval ſervice, is to be ſolely directed by the Iriſh Parliament, although it is to ariſe out of an hereditary revenue, ſettled more than a century paſt by an Iriſh Parliament upon the King of England and Ireland.

The eventual ſupply, for ſuch it only is, now to be granted, will depend for its exiſtence and quantity upon an increaſe of Iriſh trade, neceſſarily requiring a larger eſtabliſhment of force and expence. If there be no increaſe, there will be no ſupply, and if there be an increaſe, the ſupply will riſe only in proportion to it.

When assistance has been purchased by Great Britain, as it has been almost in every war, from allies unconnected with her by any common interest, and without any of the qualifying circumstances, which attend what those, whom we have alluded to, call a tribute, however those subsidised powers may have been blamed for submitting to such terms, Great Britain has been often served but never dishonoured by becoming thus tributary to many a petty Prince. Yet in this sense only would Ireland be tributary to Great Britain, for her assistance by paying an annual sum, more properly termed a subsidy, than a tribute.

Should the adjustment now proposed by the Parliament of Ireland be rejected here, God grant that without any degree of prescience exceeding what is derived from experience and a slight knowledge of History, we shall not be better warranted than the abovementioned North British Member was in his prediction, when we foretel that the King of Great Britain and Ireland, while he retains both characters, giving his assent to the bills of each Parliament, will not be able to exercise that function of Royal legislative power consistently with the duty of a common Father to all his subjects.

We shall therefore conclude by hoping that whatever opposition may be consistently given by those who either voted against the two bills mentioned in the foregoing abstract, or did not vote at all, none who joined in their support uppon the principle that Great Britain and Ireland should retain all their respective natural or acquired advantages, but subject to the same duties upon importation and upon exportation to Foreign Markets, will oppose a further enlargement of the trade of Ireland grounded upon the same principles, certain as it is that the acquired advantages of Great Britain incomparably exceed the superiority of those natural to Ireland. Nay we are far from conceding any superiority to Ireland in the sum total of gifts gratuitously bestowed by Providence without Labour and Industry.

Resolutions

Reſolutions of the Houſe of Commons of Ireland.

Reſolved I. That it is the opinion of this committee, that it is highly important to the intereſt of the Britiſh Empire, that the trade between Great Britain and Ireland b extended as much as poſſible, and for that purpoſe, that the intercourſe and commerce be finally ſettled and regulated on permanent and equitable principles, for the mutual benefit of both countries.

Reſolved II. That towards carrying into full effect ſo deſirable a ſettlement, it is fit and proper that all articles, not the growth of Great Britain and Ireland, ſhould be imported into each Kingdom from the other, under the ſame regulations, and at the ſame duties, if ſubject to duties, to which they are liable when imported directly from the place of their growth, product, or manufacture; and that all duties originally paid on importation, to either country reſpectively, ſhall be drawn back on exportation to the other.

Reſolved III. That for the ſame purpoſe, that it is proper that no prohibition ſhould exiſt in either country againſt the importation, uſe, or ſale of any article, the growth, product, or manufacture of the other; and that the duty on the importation of every ſuch article, if ſubject to duty in either country, ſhould be preciſely the ſame in one country as in the other, except where an addition may be neceſſary in either country, in conſequence of an internal duty on any ſuch article of its own conſumption.

Reſolved IV. That in all caſes where the duties on articles of the growth, product, or manufacture of either country are different on the importation into the other, it would be expedient that they ſhould be reduced in the Kingdom where they are the higheſt, to the amount payable in the other, and that all ſuch articles ſhould be exportable from the Kingdom into which they ſhall be imported, as free from duty as the ſimilar commodities or home manufactures of the ſame Kingdom.

Reſolved V. That for the ſame purpoſe, it is alſo proper that in all caſes where either Kingdom ſhall charge articles of its own conſumption with an internal duty on the manufacture, or a duty on the material, the ſame manufacture, when imported from the other, may be charged with a further duty on importation, to the ſame amount as the internal duty on the manufacture, or to an amount adequate to countervail the duty on the material, and ſhall be entitled to ſuch drawbacks or bounties on exportation, as may leave the ſame ſubject to no heavier burthen than the home-made manufacture; ſuch further duty to continue ſo long only as the internal conſumption ſhall be charged with the duty orduties; to balance which it ſhall be impoſed, or until the manufacture coming from the other Kingdom ſhall be ſubjected there

there to an equal burthen, not drawn back or compenſated on exportation.

Reſolved VI. That in order to give permanency to the ſettlements now intended to be eſtabliſhed, it is neceſſary that no prohibition, or new or additional duties, ſhould be hereafter impoſed in either kingdom, on the importation of any article of the growth, product, or manufacture of the other, excep, ſuch additional duties, as may be requiſite to balance duties on internal conſumption, purſuant to the foregoing reſolution.

Reſolved VII. That for the ſame purpoſe, it is neceſſary further, that no prohibitions, or new additional duties, ſhould be hereafter impoſed on either kingdoms, on the exportation of any article of native growth, product, or manufacture, from thence to the other, except ſuch as either kingdom may deem expedient from time to time, upon corn, meal, malt, flour, and biſcuit; and alſo, except where there now exiſts any prohibition, which is not reciprocal, or any duty, which is not equal, in both kingdoms; in every which caſe the prohibition may be made reciprocal, or the duties raiſed ſo as to make them equal.

Reſolved VIII. That for the ſame purpoſe, it is neceſſary that no bounties whatſoever ſhould be paid, or payable in either kingdom, on the exportation of any article to the other, except ſuch as relate to corn, meal, malt flour, and biſcuits, and ſuch as are in the nature of drawbacks or compenſations for duties paid; and that no bounties ſhould be granted in this kingdom, on the exportation of any article imported from the Britiſh Plantations, or any manufacture made of ſuch article, unleſs in caſes where a ſimilar bounty is payable in Britain on exportation from thence or where ſuch bounty is merely in the nature of a drawback, or compenſation of or for duties paid over and above any duties paid thereon in Britain.

Reſolved IX. That it is expedient for the general benefit of the Britiſh Empire, that the importation of articles from foreign States ſhould be regulated from time to time, in each kingdom, on ſuch terms as may afford an effectual preference to the importation of ſimilar articles of the growth, produce, or manufacture of the other.

Reſolved X. That for the better protection of trade, whatever ſum the groſs hereditary revenue of this kingdom (after deducting all drawbacks, repayments, or bounties granted in the nature of drawbacks) ſhall produce annually, over and above the ſum of £. ſhould be appropriated towards the ſupport of the *Naval Force* of the Empire, in *ſuch manner as the Parliament of this Kingdom* ſhall direct.

A SHORT,

A SHORT VIEW OF THE PROPOSALS

LATELY MADE FOR THE

Final Adjuſtment of the Commercial Syſtem between GREAT-BRITAIN and IRELAND.

THE Propoſals from Ireland, for ſettling the Trade between this Country and that, upon principles of equity and mutual benefit; and above all, for uniting more cloſely the two kingdoms, are undoubtedly of the greateſt national importance. With this view, it is material to examine, whether the objections raiſed, outweigh the manifeſt advantage of ſuch a ſettlement.

It is intended therefore, to ſtate briefly a few facts, in order to ſhew what Ireland enjoys already, from former conceſſions, ſo as to be able to appretiate juſtly what is now propoſed to be given, for the important purpoſes beofre ſtated.

It was the act of the 15th of Charles II. ch. 7, which for the firſt time confined to England alone, the liberty of ſending European produce to the Colonies, with a reſervation to Ireland to ſend ſervants, horſes, and victual; ſome few other articles have been allowed to be ſent from thence by ſubſequent ſtatutes.

It was the 22 and 23 Charles II. ch. 26, which firſt prohibited Tobacco, Sugar, Cotton, Dyeing Woods, and other enumerated produce of the Britiſh Colonies, from being ſent to Ireland, except through England: But theſe Acts were explained and enforced by ſubſequent Acts of Parliament: So that in Law and in Fact, none of the enumerated produce of the Britiſh

Plantations before mentioned could be brought to Ireland in any other manner except through England, from that early period, to the year 1780.

It was at this time when the Iriſh Parliament had aſked ſpecifically for a free trade, as a redreſs of their grievances, that Lord North propoſed and carried through the Act of 20 George III. chap. 10. this law completely opened the direct Trade between Ireland and the Britiſh Plantations in America and Africa: For it enacted, That any goods which may be legally imported from Britiſh America and Africa into Britain, may, in like manner, be directly imported from the ſaid Plantations into Ireland; that goods may in the ſame direct manner be ſent from Ireland to the ſaid Colonies and Settlements; on condition however of paying the ſame duties in Ireland as ſhall be paid in Britain, and allowing the ſame draw-back. The Levant Trade was opened to Ireland during the ſame Seſſion, by the 20 Geo. III. ch. 18.

When, in ſuperaddition to theſe extenſive grants, Mr. Fox propoſed and carried through the Act of 22 George III. ch. 53, for admitting the Independence of the Iriſh Legiſlature, Ireland was left at its own diſcretion, to regulate its Commerce to all Foreign Countries; and every Britiſh Act of Parliament with regard to Commerce or the Cuſtoms ceaſed to be of any authority in Ireland. Lord North's Act delivered over to the Iriſh all the advantages of the Colony Trade:—Mr. Fox's Act gave to Ireland the Independent direction of its Commerce with Foreigners. By the firſt meaſure, the Iriſh were allowed to import directly all the Articles of Weſt India Produce. By the ſecond the Iriſh were enabled to ſend them, as they pleaſed, to all the Markets in Europe. It is not intended to diſpute the propriety of theſe firſt conceſſions, though perhaps the mode of them might well be queſtioned; but whatever diſadvantages have reſulted, or may reſult, from either, or both of them, ought at leaſt to be traced up to their original ſources.

While the Iriſh Trade was in this manner made free to the Levant and to Europe, Africa, and America; that with Great Britain continued fettered by various reſtrictions; and in conſequence, there ſubſiſted a thouſand

ſand embarraſſments in the Commerce between the Siſter-kingdoms, which ought on the contrary to be cheriſhed as a Coaſt Trade. It is to be remembered too, that when the important conceſſions before enumerated were made by thoſe Miniſters, nothing was required, at leaſt nothing was ſtipulated in return. No meaſure was then adopted for giving effect to the Act of Navigation, ſo delivered over (to uſe Mr. Fox's *preſent language*) to the cuſtody of the Iriſh Cuſtom-houſe Officers; and yet theſe ſame men, with a happy conſiſtency for which they are ſo famous, now urge this as a charge againſt the Syſtem at preſent propoſed.

Nothing was, however, done by either of them, towards examining into the ſtate of the Manufactories of the two countries, with a view of removing the preſent, or guarding againſt future difficulties, and putting them on a footing of reciprocal advantages, ſo as to give a ſpur to the induſtry and exertions of each.

The war of drawbacks and bounties, the claims of equalizing and protecting duties, the agreements for non-importation and non-conſumption of Britiſh Manufactures, and a general ſpirit of jealouſy and diſcontent, were the natural conſequences of theſe omiſſions.

In this diſtracted ſtate were the affairs of Ireland delivered over to the preſent Miniſters. In conſequence of their inveſtigations, propoſals are now made to Parliament for a final ſettlement between the two kingdoms, which may be collected under three heads: 1ſt, That the produce of each kingdom ſhall be imported into the other upon equal duties, taking for that purpoſe the loweſt rate of duty in each. 2dly, That Foreign Goods which had been imported into either, may be carried to the other, upon the ſame duties as if coming directly from the place of their growth: And, 3dly, That beſides ſupporting the Civil and Military Eſtabliſhment of Ireland, means ſhall be concerted for providing a Revenue applicable to the more general purpoſes of the Empire.

To the firſt meaſure what reaſonable man can object, who conſiders the ſituation of both kingdoms, as to their religion and laws, their credit and capital, their induſtry and ingenuity; and who adverts to the fact, that Britiſh

Manufactures have for years ſucceſsfully carried on a competition with the Iriſh in their own Market, though they went thither loaded with taxes and charges of importation and ſale?

If, however, any man entertains a doubt on this ſubject, let him ſuſpend his opinion till the Evidence is produced which was promiſed by the Miniſter in the Houſe of Commons, and ſtated to be the reſult of an accurate inveſtigation of every Manufacture which can be affected by the arrangement; and let him in the mean time recollect, that the Iriſh Manufactures will come into this country burthened with duties, in general amounting to 10l. per cent. which is ſurely a ſufficient protection for eſtabliſhed Manufactures againſt any competition.

To the ſecond meaſure ſome objections have indeed been made, chiefly with a view to the Weſt-India Trade. It is ſuggeſted, that French Sugars will be ſmuggled from the Weſt-Indies to Ireland, and from thence to Britain. It is ſaid, as before mentioned, that the cuſtody of the Act of Navigation is delivered to Ireland: And it is moreover aſſerted, that a breach would be made in that great bulwark of our maritime ſtrength.

As to the firſt objection, it is ſurely apparent, that as the Law now ſtands upon Lord North's conceſſion, Sugars may be equally ſmuggled from the Weſt Indies to Ireland, and may be thence ſmuggled to Britain, with almoſt equal eaſe as if they were admitted to a lawful entry from Ireland to England.

Againſt this illicit Trade we have a double ſecurity; the invariable policy of France, confirmed by innumerable Edicts, has been to prevent all foreign ſhips from taking on board Sugars, &c. in their Colonies; and our Laws, both in England and Ireland, poſitively prohibit the importation of ſuch produce from any parts, except from our own Colonies. It ſhould be conſidered alſo, that Sugar, from its bulky paſſage, cannot eaſily be ſhipped or landed fraudently; and that, from its periſhable nature, it is liable to ſuſtain great loſs in removal; it cannot be put on ſhore in open bays which ſmugglers frequent with other articles, but muſt be landed in ſome port.

Can

Can the Iriſh ſmuggler enter into competition with the American ſmuggler for the ſame article? Can the Iriſh ſmuggler carry with *him* a ſufficient equivalent in credit or goods, to buy a cargo of Sugar, conſidering how much the French Sugars have riſen in price ſince the Peace? But, laſtly, would the ſmuggler find an adequate advantage for his riſques and his voyage, conſidering the ſmall duty on Sugar, in compariſon with its value, and conſidering the competition he would meet with from the Sugars lawfully imported?

As to the ſecond objection, it may be allowed, that as far as the Act of Navigation is to operate as a law of Ireland, the execution of it muſt be entruſted to the Iriſh Revenue Officers: To their cuſtody it was delivered by Lord North and Mr. Fox in 1780 and 1782; and there ſeems no valid reaſon for ſuppoſing, that the Iriſh Officers are leſs worthy of truſt than the Cuſtom-houſe Officers in the Colonies, or even in England. There is the ſame gradation of offices in the one kingdom as in the other, from the Comiſſioners of the Revenue to the Tidewaiter, who are all equally bound to execute their truſt, and who may be all removed, if any miſconduct ſhall be found.

That opening and extending ſtill more the Navigation between the ports of the Siſter Kingdoms, would deſtroy or enfeeble the principle of the Navigation Act, is an objection which ſurely requires ſome proof or explanation. The great purpoſe of that juſtly celebrated Law is, to raiſe the greateſt poſſible number of native ſhipping and ſeamen. Our Coaſting Trade has beſt anſwered this valuable purpoſe, by breeding the greateſt number of excellent ſeamen, who by returning the moſt frequently into port, may be ſooneſt had when their ſervices are wanted.

Iriſh ſhips and ſeamen were declared by the act of Navigation itſelf to be Engliſh ſhips and ſeamen, which was in this reſpect expreſsly re-enacted in 1778; and they are conſequently entitled to the ſame privileges, and ſubject to the ſame ſervices.

But in truth it does not appear, how the Regulations now propoſed will have the effect of increaſing the ſhips and ſeamen of Ireland to the extent which has been imagined.—The ſurplus produce of Europe, which Ireland may

may have to ſpare after ſatisfying her domeſtic demands, may, as the Law now ſtands, be ſent to England under a liberal conſtruction of the Act of Navigation and the eſtabliſhed practice. This branch of Commerce will therefore undergo no alteration.—Ireland has not yet engaged in the African Trade.—She will not probably enter into a ſucceſsful competition in it with Liverpool: From this ſource, therefore, Ireland is not likely to have ſoon any ſurplus to ſpare.

During the ſix years that ſhe has enjoyed the Weſt India Trade, ſhe has not yet ſupplied her own conſumption; for there were exported from England to Ireland

In	1774,	of Sugar,	172,406 Cwt.
In	1784,	of Ditto,	160,083 Cwt.
In	1774,	of Rum,	363,822 Gallons.
In	1784,	of Ditto,	944,479 Gallons.

And nearly in the ſame proportion of other Weſt India Produce.

Ireland has therefore to ſmuggle for ſuch a conſumption as the foregoing, before ſhe can ſend the articles into England to advantage;—the chances of the prices being accidentally lower here will never be an inducement, as the Markets fluctuate almoſt daily: Sugars therefore ſhipped at Cork or Waterford, with a view to a better price in London, Briſtol or Liverpool, may come to a worſe market than at home, with all the charges of freight, inſurance, Cuſtum-houſe fees, and waſte, which laſt is conſiderable.

It may be worth enquiring how the Iriſh are to procure the Sugars, which ſome perſons are ſo apprehenſive will be ſent through Ireland to Britain. They muſt get the Weſt India produce, either by conſignment or purchaſe.

If the Planter chooſes to conſign his Sugars to Ireland with a view to ſelling them, he may do it now; but he will never ſend them there in order to come afterwards to this Country. Will the Planter, who is now very frequently under covenant to conſign his Sugars to his Merchant, from whom in ſuch caſes he expects advances, ſend his Sugars to Ireland, where he can expect little credit? Or, will any Planter conſign his produce to Ireland, where it muſt be ſold at ſix months credit, in

pre-

preference to England, where it is ſold at a leſs riſque, payable in two months? Glaſgow has never had many conſignments, becauſe, like Ireland, her Market is narrow.

The Iriſh then muſt purchaſe the Sugars which they want. It is calculated, that one Cargo of Iriſh produce, will purchaſe only half the lading of the ſhip which carried it out; the other half muſt be purchaſed with bills, for which an Indorſer muſt be found at the expence of two pounds and an half per cent. The Proviſions always go to a precarious Market in the Weſt Indies: The Sugars, which is liable to a great waſte and other damages, alſo comes to a precarious Market in Europe; and it is a fact, that owing to the beforementioned cauſes, the Weſt India Trade has already proved almoſt as fatal to the Iriſh Merchants, as the American Trade has done to the Traders of France.

The Iriſh Merchant who had it in his power to bring the produce of the colonies directly to this Country, was enabled under Lord North's Law to invoice a Cargo to be delivered part at Cork or Waterford, and part at Briſtol or London; is it then poſſible to conceive, that under the propoſed extenſion, he will import circuitouſly after a landing in Ireland, under all the diſadvantages of double freight, inſurances, Cuſtom-houſe fees, &c. &c. &c. as before obſerved, what ſhe can now import directly?

Conſidering then how much Ireland already enjoys under the conceſſions of the laſt ſeven years, the allowing her to re-ſhip her ſurplus Sugars to Britain, is a boon ſcarcely worth a conteſt. Conſidering too, that her Sugars muſt thus come into competition with the Sugars directly imported, there is ſurely not much ground for apprehenſion.

The queſtion as to the Act of Navigation may be thus briefly ſummed up: From former conceſſions, the Trade of Ireland is free to Foreign Nations; it is only limited as to her Siſter Kingdom. European produce ſhe may now ſend here; the produce of Africa and the Weſt-Indies ſhe cannot ſend, if ſhe had them. If Ireland gains no more by her American Trade than France, who is ſtill obliged to buy Tobacco in London, ſhe will not ſoon have much Colony produce to ſpare: for although ſhe has ſome local advantages, ſhe is infinitely behind France in Means of purchaſing, and in Credit.

What

What valid reaſon can be given, then, for with-holding the little that on this head of the buſineſs is aſked, making, as it does, a part of a whole Syſtem, which will ſecure to this Country a conſtant and increaſing aſſiſtance towards defraying the general expences of the Empire. To judge of this proſpect, it is worth while to ſtate, that the hereditary Revenue, the ſurplus of which is to be appropriated to this purpoſe, produced, in the year ending at Lady-day laſt, 659,000l. which in 1684 amounted to no more than 234,076l. as appears by a Manuſcript in the Harleian Collection. During the late Peace it continued increaſing from 586,369l. in 1763, to 694,961l. in 1777.

If Ireland increaſed thus rapidly in her reſources during the long period of her oppreſſion, what may we not expect the produce to be when ſhe is relieved therefrom.

It is impoſſible to review the general heads of this revenue without perceiving that the Trade, Manufactures, or Population of Ireland cannot increaſe, without the effect being felt in the proportionable augmentation of that Revenue: The only ſuppoſition, therefore, on which it can be imagined that nothing conſiderable will ariſe from it to the general ſupport of the Empire, muſt be, that Ireland will derive no advantages from this Arrangement, or from the benefits of which ſhe is now in poſſeſſion.

Upon the whole of this intereſting buſineſs, let it be conſidered, that it is now undertaken, for the firſt time, to obtain a final ſettlement of every great Commercial Point between the two countries; that this is brought forward upon the moſt mature deliberation, and on the fulleſt inveſtigation; and let every impartial man decide, when he has ſeen all the Evidence which is to be offered in ſupport of the Arrangement, whether it will be moſt for the advantage of this country to acquieſce with a ſettlement which muſt neceſſarily unite the two Countries for ever, and promote their mutal advantage, rendering Ireland a ſource of wealth and ſtrength to this country; or to reject it, and abide by all the ill conſequences which will follow to both the kingdoms, by a revival of jealouſies, contentions, and jarring intereſts.

THE

THE ARRANGEMENTS WITH IRELAND CONSIDERED.

THE ſpirit of commerce, by making the many leſs dependent on the few, gradually overturned the maſſy fabric of the feudal conſtitutions. The progreſs of this ſpirit has, even in the ſhort period of the preſent century, ſoftened the temper of every European government. And it was the ſilent prevalence of this ſpirit, more perhaps than the avowed operations of deſign, which, during late times, prompted ſo many requeſts on the part of Ireland, and dictated ſo many grants by Great-Britain.

That much has been aſked at different times and much has been given will not be regretted by thoſe, who wiſh to ſee fellow-ſubjects enjoy privileges; or by thoſe, who value above all things the bleſſings of domeſtic quiet within a convulſed Empire. It is only to be lamented, that what was at laſt done, was not deciſively done, on the fair principles of mutual advantage and laſting contentment.

If we briefly review the reſtraints, which had been impoſed formerly by our mercantile avarice more than by our jealouſy; if we ſhortly conſider the relief which has been given, during the laſt ſeven years, by our apprehenſions, more than by our policy; if we compare the extent of what Ireland actually enjoys with the little that is now withheld; we ſhall ſee the truth of that regret in the beſt light, and probably determine, that there is now nothing in conteſt between the ſiſter kingdoms, which can poſſibly counter-balance the diſagreeableneſs of future altercation, the pleaſures of promiſed concord, and the profit of equal induſtry, directed to one common end.

In 1778, which may be regarded as the period of rigour and the beginning of conceſſion, the produce of Ireland, except woollens, cottons, and hats, glaſs, hops, gunpowder and coals, were allowed to be exported* to the Britiſh Colonies in America, and to the Britiſh ſettlements in Africa: Iron too was permitted, on paying ſpecified duties. And foreign manufactures, which had been imported through England into Ireland for her own conſumption, were equally allowed to be tranſported to the ſame diſtant markets.

To enable us to judge of the value of what was then given, or withheld, we ought to recollect, that this act only reſtored ancient rights, without conferring new ones. All this and more might have been lawfully done from the commencement of colonization to the epoch of the Reſtoration: All this was permitted to be done, by the act of navigation itſelf †. Even the law, which in the firſt inſtance, excluded Ireland from the unreſtrained trade of our diſtant dominions, allowed ſervants, horſes and victuals to be ſent from Ireland to our colonies ‡; and to theſe articles linens were added by the 3 and 4 of An. ch. 8.—If we reflect, that the Iriſh exports of proviſions and linen alone amounted yearly to 3,250,000*l.* while the annual value of the whole exported products of Ireland was only 3,500,000*l.* ‖; we ſhall not probably think, that many of the reſtraints on that eſſential right of every community, to make the moſt of its own advantages, were even then withdrawn.

When the embargoes and embarraſſments of the war filled up at length the meaſure of Ireland's diſtreſſes; when the Iriſh aſked plainly for a free trade as an adequate relief from commercial burdens, we relinquiſhed much, but did not grant a free trade.

In 1779 indeed, we had allowed the importation of tobacco, being the growth of Ireland, under the like duties and regulations as American tobacco, when imported into Britain. A regard to our own manufactures more than to theirs, had induced us at the ſame time to grant a bounty on the import of Iriſh hemp into this kingdom §.

But

* By 18 Geo. III. ch. 55. But the articles, which were then excepted were allowed by the 20 Geo. III. chap. 10, for opening the Colony Trade.

† See 12 Ch. 2. ch. 18.

‡ By 15 Ch. 2. ch. 7.

‖ See Mr. Young's Tour in Ireland, Appen. p. 144.

§ By 19 Geo. III. Ch. 37.

But it was not till 1780, that after much delay, without much conſideration, we reſtored to Ireland an equal trade to the Britiſh colonies in Africa and America*; including the export of her woollens, which it had been the object of ſo many laws to prevent. We allowed too a direct commerce between Ireland and the Levant, by perſons free of the Levant Company. And the gold and ſilver coins, which the Iriſh abſentees were ſuppoſed to have brought into England were now permitted to be ſent back to Ireland †.

This then is the amount of what may be called Lord North's conceſſions to Ireland. Whatever diſadvantage may have reſulted from them to Britain he merits the blame:—Whatever good flowed from them to Ireland he equally deſerves her praiſe. Certain however it is, that after all, Ireland did not enjoy compleatly the plantation trade: For a people, who cannot diſpoſe of the commodities, which remain after domeſtic conſumption is ſatisfied, cannot conſume at the cheapeſt rate; ſince every ultimate diſadvantage muſt be conſidered by the ſupplier both in buying and ſelling: Now, Ireland was ſtill reſtrained, by an act ‡ paſſed only eight years before, from ſending out of her own ports the colony produce to Britain. The domeſtic manufacturers of Ireland continued ſtill to be loaded with many burdens, and her traffick with foreign countries to be prevented by a thouſand obſtructions. To take away with one hand what is given by the other, can never merit the praiſe of liberality, however it may be contemned as equally inconſiſtent with plain dealing as it is with ſound policy.

Amidſt her ſubſequent embarraſſments Ireland thought, what no one who loves freedom will blame h for thinking, that ſhe could manage beſt her own affairs her own way. With this view, ſhe aſked for a free Legiſlature; for a parliament over which no other parliament ſhould be paramount. And Mr. Fox propoſed in 1782, and cauſed to be enacted a law ‖ for repealing the ſtatute of the 6th of Geo. I. which ſecured the dependency of Ireland. But, with all his renown for promptitude and deciſiveneſs he did not grant all that was aſked, or at leaſt what was regarded in Ireland as effectual to the end.

* By 20 Geo. III. ch. 10.
† For all which ſee 20 Geo. III. ch. 18.
‡ 12 Geo. III. ch. 55.
‖ 22 Geo. III. ch. 53.

And he once more eſſayed his legiſlative talents, by carrying through in the ſubſequent year, an * act for declaring, *that the right claimed by the people of Ireland to be bound by laws made in their own Parliament, and to have all law-ſuits decided finally in their own courts, ſhall be eſtabliſhed for ever.* The declaration made thus to Ireland, *that your legiſlature ſhall in future be free*, though a ſimple propoſition, contained many conſequences, that were by no means apparent to every one, and that were perhaps not all foreſeen, by the author of the Iriſh revolution. For, the energy of the Britiſh legiſlature being thus withdrawn, all Britiſh acts of legiſlation ceaſed to operate in Ireland: Neither reſtrictions nor facilities, which had flowed from a fountain, that no longer flowed, could any more adminiſter either good or evil to Ireland. If any miſchief has reſulted to Britain from theſe meaſures, Mr. Fox merits the blame; whatever benefits have reſulted to Ireland he equally merits her commendations. We ſhall probably find by no long enquiry, that ſome advantages and many inconveniencies did reſult from the before-mentioned meaſures; owing to a real want of foreſight in the authors of them, and to the conſequent want of ſyſtem, both in the object and the means.

The change itſelf may have indeed produced ſome inconvenience to Ireland firſt, and to Britain afterwards. But, it was the inadequateneſs of the inconſiderate modes to the before-mentioned ends, which gave riſe to the recent diſputes and dangers, both commercial and political. Lord North (as we have ſeen) avowedly opened to Ireland the trade to our Colonies: Mr. Fox virtually extended the Iriſh commerce with foreign nations: yet, both theſe miniſters left the trade and navigation between the Siſter Kingdoms, which, conſidering their relationſhip and proximity, ought to be the moſt free, obnoxious to many diſputes, and liable to ſome obſtructions. The Iriſh naturally inferred, that when a thing is given, all muſt neceſſarily be given, without which the ſame thing cannot be enjoyed. When they found moreover their Portugal trade embarraſſed, their jealouſy traced up the cauſe to the ſame temper, which, after pretending to give the whole had only given a part. They feared, that the admitting freely into Britain without a duty the proviſions of Ireland would operate as a tax upon their own conſumption. They complained, that the

* 23 Geo. III. c. 3.

the prohibiting by high duties the importation of their woollens and other ſtuffs into Britain, while they excluded from their markets foreign goods of the ſame kind, ſhewed a diſpoſition to oppreſs, without benefitting the oppreſſors themſelves: and that the allowing of drawbacks on the export of Britiſh refined ſugars, ſailcloth and cottons, amounted to a tax on their inconſiderable manufactures of the ſame kind. To quiet theſe complaints, by removing or obviating the chief cauſe of them, no proviſion ſeems to have been made either by Lord North, or Mr. Fox; ſince no inquiries were certainly made by either of them into the real ſtate of the manufactures of both countries, in order to remove the jealouſies of tradeſmen, by putting the manufactures and buſineſs of all upon an equitable footing; and by getting in return ſome ſecurity for future ſatisfaction.

To the before-mentioned cauſes may be truly referred the deſire of protecting duties and equalizing drawbacks, which have been inſiſted on, together with aſſociations of non-importation of Britiſh manufactures, which were actually executed with no ſmall effect, when legal modes of redreſs had been denied. And while Britain began to enjoy all the bleſſings of returning peace, Ireland fell back into an abyſs of deeper diſtractions, and ſeemed ready to ſeek relief even from the miſeries of civil war.

The diſturbances of Ireland, which thus plainly aroſe from large conceſſions without previous concert, and from a poſitive admiſſion of independence without any agreement of future aid, were bequeathed with other ſimilar legacies by the late miniſters to the preſent. Of this ſtate the whole nation felt the unhappineſs, and every one wiſhed for an inveſtigation of the true cauſes of thoſe diſorders, that effectual remedies might be ſought. The wiſhes of the public were doubtleſs complied with, by much inquiry firſt, and by much conſideration afterwards. Were we to judge from actual effects more than from public report, we may infer, that thoſe perſons who knew beſt the affairs of Ireland and were intruſted with her intereſts, have been conſulted with regard to the origin of the diſeaſe as well as to the efficacy of the cure.

Of the Iriſh Parliament it cannot be aſſerted, as of the American Congreſs, that when oppreſſed by their grievances they declined to trace up their ſufferings to the true ſource, to avow their real object, and to point out plainly ſuch means as would be fully adequate to the end

of

of removing real diſtreſs and preventing after jealouſies. To juſtify this remark it is unneceſſary to recapitulate the addreſſes of the Iriſh Parliament, during the laſt ſeven years. It is ſufficient to mention the Reſolves, which were entered into, on the 7th of February, 1785, by the Iriſh Commons, with ſuch apparent ſincerity and zeal, *for encouraging and extending the trade between Great Britain and Ireland, and for ſettling the intercourſe and commerce between them on permanent and equitable principles, in order to promote the mutual benefit of both countries.*

Whether theſe are objects of the higheſt importance to the general intereſt of the Britiſh Empire, what unprejudiced perſon can doubt? As the Parliamentary Reſolutions of a ſiſter kingdom, they merit the higheſt attention; as propoſals directed to the moſt uſeful end, they deſerve the moſt candid diſcuſſion; and as meaſures which lead directly to the peaceful ſettlement of a diſtracted Empire upon a digeſted plan of ſyſtematic government, theſe propoſals ought to be ſupported by every wiſe and good man, were they leſs juſt in their principle and leſs ſalutary in their means.

Though the ſpecifick propoſals of the Iriſh Parliament have been detailed, for the ſake of perſpicuity, into ten reſolutions, they may be conſidered under three diſtinct heads: 1ſt, As they tend to affect our domeſtic manufactures; 2dly, As they will probably enlarge or diminiſh the foreign trade of both; and 3dly, as the public burthen may be lightened at preſent, or leſſened in future, were theſe reſolves ſubſtantially adopted. It is propoſed to ſpeak briefly of each of theſe points, according to the foregoing arrangement.

1. Whether admitting the products and manufactures of the ſiſter kingdom mutually into each other, without paying any other duty than the loweſt duty, which may be payable on importation in either country, except where an internal duty may have already been impoſed on the ſame article of the importing country, is doubtleſs a queſtion of great importance, which merits ſerious diſcuſſion. The general propoſal plainly is, that the products and manufactures of both kingdoms ſhall be mutually imported and conſumed, with as little burthen, and as equally as poſſible. And to this it is objected: *That the advantage of cheap proviſions, low wages, and no taxes, muſt enable the*

the Iriſh manufacturer to underſell the Engliſh at every market, not excepting our own, particularly in woollens. The objector evidently borrowed his documents from Lord Sheffield's *Obſervations on the Iriſh Trade*, without adverting, how clearly the noble author hath proved, *that at the time Ireland, on the opening of her ports for exportation of woollens, made an effort to ſend the greateſt quantity to foreign markets, ſhe increaſed her imports of woollens from England: That Ireland is hardly in a ſituation to agree to that propoſal; as Great Britain could underſell her in moſt manufactures; ſuch is the predominancy of ſuperior ſkill, induſtry and capitals, over low priced labour, and comparatively very few taxes* *. The queſtion then is anſwered, as far as Lord Sheffield may be allowed to anſwer it.

But let us attend to the reaſon of the thing. It is unneceſſary on this occaſion, to revive the famous controverſy; *Whether a poor country, where raw materials and proviſions are cheap, and wages low, can ſupplant the trade of a rich manufacturing country, where raw materials and proviſions are dear, and the price of labour high:* This point has been ſo decidedly ſettled in favour of the rich manufacturing country by Dean Tucker, that it can be now only brought forward by ignorance, or intereſt, or faction. Let us only conſider the caſe of two individual manufacturers ſettled in the ſame neighbourhood, a rich one and a poor one: The rich one, being already poſſeſſed of capital, credit, and cuſtomers, can plainly buy his materials at the cheapeſt rate, work them up in the beſt manner, becauſe he can give the beſt wages to the beſt workmen, and diſpoſe of his finiſhed goods more readily and lower than the poor one: If the rich manufacturer employs a capital of £. 2000, and the poor one only £. 200, the rich manufacturer, by gaining ten per cent. or £. 200 a year, can live comfortably; but the poor tradeſman muſt gain 20 per cent. or £. 40 a year, before he can live at all: Conſequently the rich manufacturer muſt be always able to underſell the poor one 10 per cent. on every article. Every manufacturer, however opulent and eſtabliſhed he may now be, muſt remember the many difficulties he had to encounter in his youth, when he met his richer neighbour in every market, whether in buying

* See Obſervations on the Iriſh Trade, p. 13, 19.

buying his materials, in employing the moſt expert workmen, or in ſelling his goods: And he may recollect perhaps with pleaſure, that it required a life of patience, attention, and induſtry, to ſurmount every difficulty, attending a too powerful competition, and to become himſelf rich.

A manufacturing town is compoſed of ſuch individuals, whoſe active competitions promote the proſperity and riches of their neighbourhood. A ſimilar competition may prevail between a rich manufacturing town and a poor one: But, has Bolton yet overcome Mancheſter? Has Rochdale overpowered Leeds? or has Walſal eclipſed the ſkill, and induſtry, and opulence of Birmingham? It is on the other hand known and underſtood, that all the little towns, which ſtand within ten miles circle of Mancheſter, Leeds, and Birmingham, are the mere inſtruments belonging to theſe capitals of their reſpective manufactures.

Of ſuch towns and villages is a manufacturing province or kingdom compoſed; who may in the ſame manner, as a province or kingdom, enter into competition with each other. But, has Wales or Scotland, notwithſtanding their ſuppoſed advantages of cheap materials and low-priced labour, yet carried away the Woollen Manufacture from England? The truth is, England was and is in poſſeſſion (a point of great conſequence in every thing) of ſuperior wealth, which ſhe had gained, not by war, or by mines of gold and ſilver, but by ages of attention and induſtry; of eſtabliſhed credit and extenſive correſpondences; of the ſkill and experience, that reſulted from all theſe; and of the diviſion of labour, which naturally takes place in the progreſs of manufacture, and which enables the workmen not only to labour ſkilfully but to ſell cheaply.

Of all theſe advantages Ireland is doubtleſs in ſome degree poſſeſt. But, the nature of the queſtion ſuppoſes a great inferiority, otherwiſe there would be no reaſon for apprehenſion. Of the ſtate of Ireland, in reſpect of lowneſs of labour, habits of induſtry, cheapneſs of living, and extent of capital, it may be proper however to inquire a little more minutely.

If it is allowed, that there are two million and a half of people in Ireland; it will be equally admitted that the two millions are Roman Catholics, and that the half million

tion are Proteſtants. The Proteſtants reſide chiefly in the North, and are principally employed in carrying on the Linen Manufactures. It is a remarkable fact in the œconomy of theſe tradeſmen, that each occupies a little farm, which he cultivates in due ſeaſon, though he may be obliged to ſtop the loom, in order to follow the plough. And his capital and his time are conſequently directed to a different employment from his real buſineſs. He is therefore neither ſo good a farmer, nor manufacturer, as if he employed his undivided attention and money to one object. This fact alone evinces, that induſtry has not ariſen to that ſtate of improvement, even among the moſt induſtrious of the Iriſh manufacturers, which reſults from the diviſion of labour; conſiſting as this happy circumſtance does, in the workmen applying attentively to one buſineſs only and even ſolely to one branch of this buſineſs. But, no cheapneſs of labour can compenſate for the beforementioned diſtraction of employment: And no attention and ſkill can enter into conteſt for cheapneſs with the machines which have been introduced into England; as we may learn from the deciſive ſucceſs of the great works for the ſpinning of cotton. The price of wages have riſen about one fourth *, during the laſt twenty years, in both kingdoms; which remarkable fact ſufficiently evinces, that both hold an equal pace in improvements and in wealth. Common labour is little more than one third of what it is in England; yet it is very extraordinary, that maſons, carpenters, thatchers, and ſuch artizans ſhould be paid nearly as much in Ireland as in England; though it muſt be acknowledged, that the wages of manufacture is a good deal lower in Ireland than in England; while the rates of living are in the firſt country to the laſt as eleven to fourteen. But, in forming ſuch eſtimates we ought always to conſider whether ſuperior ſkill and induſtry are not an ample compenſation for higher wages. The common ditcher of Norfolk would be a cheaper labourer at eighteen pence a day, than the ſtouteſt Patagonian at twopence. If Ireland, from whatever cauſe, ſhould in future advance in her trade and manufactures with quicker ſteps than Britain, the price of wages will riſe in the ſame proportion; becauſe it is not the actual wealth in any country which raiſes the value of labour; but the greater demand for labour from frequent employment. The competition, which will ſoon ariſe between the linen and woollen manufac-

* Mr. Young's Tour, Appen.

turers, between the workers in ſilk and workers in cotton, muſt neceſſarily raiſe the price of every kind of labour: For, workmen never fail to purſue that buſineſs, which brings them the greateſt wages. Two very important truths ought however never to be forgotten, in forming ſuch compariſons: the general induſtry of no people can ever exceed what their capital can employ; no regulation of commerce can any where increaſe the quantity of induſtry, beyond what the capital of the country can maintain; though ſuch a regulation may divert the employment of it to a buſineſs leſs advantageous than that to which it would have naturally gone; ſeveral examples of which may be found in Ireland.

The foregoing reaſonings and facts apply chiefly to the manufacturing Proteſtants of Ireland. With regard to the great body of Iriſh people, the Roman Catholicks, it has been juſtly remarked, that the whole tenor of the Iriſh law neceſſarily tended not ſo much to convert them from their errors, as to beggar their fortunes; to depreſs them by a ſenſe of hopeleſs penury; and to render them indolent and inattentive by putting them in conſtant remembrance, that they could not better their condition by any efforts. But, the prevalence of liberality had induced the legiſlatures of both kingdoms to relax a little in their favour. And the Roman Catholicks of Ireland may now take leaſes, or buy lands, though not even now with the freedom of Proteſtants. The deſire of every man to become an owner of a portion of his country is the great realizer of mercantile capital. Whether the late freedom, which has been juſtly given to the Roman Catholicks, will therefore promote the advantage of agriculture, or the intereſts of manufacture, in Ireland, may admit of ſome doubt. A very competent judge has certainly determined * after great enquiry, that money laid out upon the improvement of the unimproved lands of Ireland would yield from fifteen to twenty per cent. profit, beſides other advantages. But, amidſt the preſent competitions of the mercantile world, what merchant or manufacturer, can expect to make more than ten per cent. by his buſineſs? It would however require (according to the ſame judge) five pounds ſterling to be expended upon every acre Engliſh, amounting to 88,341,136*l.* to

* Mr. A. Young's Tour in Ireland, Append. p. 20.

to build, fence, drain, plant and improve Ireland, in the ſame manner as the face of England is improved. It would require twenty ſhillings an acre more, amounting to above twenty millions, to ſtock the farms of Ireland, like thoſe of England. Here then is a permanent drain, which may carry off the whole accumulations of the mercantile capital of Ireland and probably will draw off many of them. Happy for Ireland will it be, if ſhe ſhall thus lay out the ſurpluſſes of her ſtock, in improving her own fields, in preference to the more ſplendid and precarious expenditure on Weſt-India eſtates. Nor is this evil much to be dreaded by the Iriſh patriot, or feared by the Engliſh partyman. The Iriſh Parliament, by giving bounties on the land-carriage of corn to Dublin, have incited a vigorous ſpirit of tillage, though to the diminution indeed of paſturage and the loſs of manufacture. It is not likely then that the mercantile ſurpluſſes of Iriſh ſtock will ſoon accumulate faſter than thoſe of Britiſh ſtock. Were we to ſuppoſe, what might eaſily be proved, that the mercantile capital of Britain is to the mercantile capital of Ireland as an hundred is to one: Were we to ſuppoſe, that the mercantile capitals of both increaſe with the vigour of compound intereſt: It would ſurely require no deep calculation to prove, how much faſter the capital of Britain muſt neceſſarily augment than the capital of Ireland.

It is nevertheleſs ſaid by ſome, and feared by others, that were we to ratify the mutual freedom of manufacture, which the Iriſh have propoſed, the labour, the ſkill, and capital of Britain would emigrate to Ireland. If it be thereby meant, that the mere artificers would retire to Ireland to get leſs wages than they now receive at home, this is ſurely no probable ſuppoſition. If it be imagined, that the moſt ſkilful artiſans would be tempted by high rewards to manage the manufactures of Ireland and inſtruct the ignorant, this is only ſaying, that the Iriſh will do that hereafter, which they have always done, without perceiveably injuring Britiſh fabricks; becauſe in proportion to the charges of the maſter, muſt the goods be enhanced to the conſumer; and it has been ſeldom found from experience, that the tradeſman, who has been tempted from his native country by high wages, has long preſerved his morals. He who aſſerts, that mercantile capital may eaſily be transferred from one country to another,

has perhaps no clear conception what mercantile capital is. Credit, and correſpondences, are as much capital as caſh. Every manufacture may certainly carry off his caſh: But, he cannot tranſport with him to a ſtrange land the good opinion of his neighbours, from which he derived ſo many benefits in the purchaſe of his raw materials; or the favours of his cuſtomers, which formed the chief vent for his finiſhed goods. The Proteſtant weavers of Ireland, who uſed to emigrate to America (the Roman Catholicks never emigrated) are ſaid to have carried away large ſums of money; but, they tranſported nothing elſe: They found themſelves among ſtrangers, without credit or friends. And they retired into the wilderneſs, where they followed the plough, but forgot the loom. He who has made a capital, by purſuing a particular object will not quit that object to look for another: He who has inherited a capital from the induſtry of his father, will not ſend his property to a place where he does not chuſe to reſide. And were we to appeal to experience we ſhould probably be convinced, that no capital having been ſent to cut the canals or work the collieries of Ireland, which have ſo long languiſhed, notwithſtanding public ſupport, none will be tranſmitted in future for ſimilar purpoſes.

But with regard to the general ſubject, a few authentic facts will be more ſatisfactory than a thouſand ſpeculations. The linen trade between the ſiſter kingdoms, has, for almoſt a century, exiſted in that free and equal ſtate, which is now propoſed for every other product, and manufacture of both. Yet, Britiſh linens have flouriſhed notwithſtanding the unlimitted competition of the Iriſh; as we may infer from the ſubjoined details *:

	Imported	Re-exported
According to a 5 years average ending with 1756, there were — — —	31,561,536 yds.	7,524,346 yds.
Ditto ending with 1771, only — — —	24,988,477	8,245,793

And thus it appears, that the domeſtic manufacture encreaſed, by the diminution of the quantity of linen, which was imported, and by the augmentation of the quantity, which

* Reports of the Linen Committee, quoted by Mr. A. Young, in Pol. Arithmetic, p. 315-16.

which was afterwards ſent out. A good deal of Britiſh linen was ſent to Ireland. But, the encreaſe of the Britiſh linens, notwithſtanding the Iriſh competition, will appear ſtill plainer, from a fair compariſon of the quantities of Britiſh and Iriſh linens, which have been exported from England.

	Britiſh Linens.	Iriſh Linens.
According to a ſeven years average, ending with 1755 -	576,373,yds.	772,245
Ditto ending with 1762 -	1,355,266	1,985,825
Ditto ending with 1769 -	2,423,664	2,033,444
in 1770 -	3,210,506	2,707,482
in 1771 -	4,411,040	3,450,224

The foregoing detail ſhews clearly enough that the Britiſh linens have greatly proſpered, though they had the Iriſh for unreſtrained competitors, and even entered into competition with the Iriſh in the Iriſh markets. And this deciſive truth will ſtill more plainly appear, from a more minute ſtatement of the Scots linen, becauſe Scotland is much more analogous to Ireland, in her ſkill, induſtry, and capital, than England. An Act of Parliament was paſſed in 1727, for encouraging the linen manufacture in Scotland. From that epoch the progreſs of this valuable manufacture has been prodigious, as appears from the ſubjoined detail *.

	Yards.
Linen ſtamped for ſale in Scotland according to a 5 years average, ending with - 1733 -	3,488,232
Ditto - - - 1742 -	4,673,373
Four years ending - 1751 -	7,543,075
in 1754 -	8,914,369
in 1774 -	11,422,115

Yet the Iriſh linens, amounting to fifteen million of yards, entered freely into competition with the Scots, in the domeſtic market, and were entitled to the ſame bounties on the exportation. And this ſeems to be a fair anſwer of the queſtion, by actual experiment, the beſt of all trials.

It having in this ſatisfactory manner appeared, that the Britiſh manufacturers have nothing to fear from the competition of the Iriſh fabricks, it is proper to enquire, what are the proper manufactures of Ireland, which may be imported

* And. Chron. Com. 2 vol. p. 400-9.

ported into Britain, even as the law now ſtands: We ſhall immediately find, that linen, and linen yarn, bay yarn, cotton yarn, beef, pork, bacon, butter, hydes, calf-ſkins, and live cattle, may be imported from Ireland duty free: That woollen cloths, ſtuffs of ſilks and cotton rugs, and fringe may be brought in, on paying a duty: And that cheeſe, and ſalt, unleſs for ſhips uſe, are alone prohibited.

Of the firſt claſs, namely, ſuch articles as may even now be legally imported, whatever may be their value (and their value amounts to nineteen twentieths of the whole imported) there is at preſent no diſpute, ſince experience hath decided in their favour.

As to the ſecond claſs, conſiſting of woollen cloths; of ſtuffs of ſilk and cotton; and of rugs and frizes; all theſe may be now imported into Britain, on paying a duty which amounts to a prohibition; the ſame articles are admitted into Ireland from Britain on paying a duty of 5 per cent. of the value; and foreign goods of the ſame kind are excluded from Ireland by prohibitory duties. It is apparent, that Ireland now may equally prohibit Britiſh woollens and admit the foreign, when ſhe may get them cheaper; which anſwers the objection, *that we give every thing, and receive nothing in return.* True indeed, Britain may equally give a preference to foreign linens over the Iriſh. But, would ſuch a conteſt be for the intereſt or happineſs of Britain, or of Ireland? The true queſtion then is, whether the woollens, cottons, or ſilks of Ireland, could rival the Britiſh in the markets of Britain, were they freely admitted, burdened only with freight and inſurance, Cuſtom-houſe fees and factorage, to the amount of 8 or 10 per cent. The general argument, whether the poor country can enter into ſucceſsful rivalry with an opulent one, has been already diſcuſſed and plainly decided in favour of the rich Manufacturing Country. But, to leave no doubt on any one's mind, it is now neceſſary to examine the point more minutely as to the woollens, ſilks, and cottons of England and Ireland.

The general aſpect of the manufactures of both countries appears to be this—The woollens predominate in Britain—The linens predominate in Ireland. From the plenty of the raw material and the encouragement of the legiſlature, the woollens of England, at an early epoch, took poſſeſſion of the country and ſo fully occupied the induſtrious

duſtrious claſſes that it always proved a too powerful competitor to the feebler fabrick of linen, of cotton, and of ſilk. On the other hand, the linen manufacture of Ireland, from the convenience of the country and the encouragement of the legiſlature has grown up to great magnitude, has fully employed the induſtrious claſſes there, however few they may be when compared with the whole people, and continues from its particular advantages to oppreſs the ſilk, the cotton, and woollen. The Iriſh woollens moreover labour under a conſiderable diſadvantage peculiar to themſelves. The whole iſland does not produce a ſufficient quantity of wool to ſupply the home market. Owing to the public encouragements to agriculture the great ſheep walks of Carlow, Tiperary, and Roſcommon have been converted into tillage. And thus the quantity of wool, which was originally too little has by this means become leſs. Of conſequence the price of wool in Ireland is from 45 to 50 per cent. higher than it is in England, the price being as about ten to ſix. In this country the value of the raw material is ſuppoſed to be about one third of the whole coſt of the cloth: In that country the amount of the raw material is two thirds * of the whole charges of the manufacture. Here then is a natural and permanent diſadvantage attending the woollen manufacture of Ireland, which can never be counter-balanced by the low price of labour, affected as it more and more muſt be by the competitions of linen, ſilk, and cotton fabrics, that are preſſed forward in the ſame country. Under ſuch diſadvantages is it likely that the woollens of Ireland, can enter into ſucceſsful competition with the woollens of England? If the linens of Ireland did not (as we have ſeen) depreſs the linens of Scotland, is it reaſonable to conclude, that the woollens of Ireland can rival the woollens of England, which, notwithſtanding the competition of

* Mr. A. Young ſtates the price of an Iriſh ball of Wool, during 1778, in this manner:

Combing and ſpinning	—	0 1	0¾
The wool	—	0 2	5¼
Whole coſt		0 3	6

See much good information on this ſubject in his Iriſh Tour, the Appendix throughout.

of Europe, have arisen up to a vast magnitude, since the commencement of the present century; as we may learn more minutely from the subjoined detail: The whole value of exported woollens, according to a five years

Average, ending with	1705	£2,579,478
Ditto	with 1775	4,344,942

It is however said—*to be astonishing how Ireland has increased her woollen trade within these few years.* It is doubtless true, that since Lord North allowed the export of Irish woollens to our Colonies, and Mr. Fox laid open the foreign trade of Ireland, she has exported those woollens openly, which she formerly did secretly: And she manufactures now what she always manufactured, poplins and tabinets, which cannot rival England, while England shall continue not to make them. But, it is an acknowledged fact, that while Ireland has been thus sending her peculiar woollens to foreigners, she has imported a greater quantity of English woollens for her own wear. This decisive fact might be sufficiently proved (were any proof wanting) by the subjoined detail:

Of British woollens there were imported into Ireland, according to a seven years average, ending with 1770 —	New Drapery. yds. 331,548	Old Drapery. yds. 205,662
Ditto according to a five years average ending the 25 March, 1784	376,719	316,625

This authentick account ought to outweigh a thousand arguments and ought therefore to calm every apprehension on the subject of woollens.

But, of Irish silks and cottons little has yet been said, far less proved. The Irish have certainly tried to introduce and support these manufactures, during the two last twenty years; though without much success. Had public boards in Ireland done less and private men been able to do more, the national efforts had been more successful. It is unnecessary to repeat arguments, which are equally applicable to cotton and silk, as they were before to woollen and linen. And every reasonable person will be sooner satisfied by

by a fair appeal to facts. With this purpose the following details are submitted to every ones judgements:—

There were imported from England into Ireland, accordding to a thirteen years average	Manufac. turned silk. lb.	Raw silk. lb.	Ribband. lb.
ending with —	1764—	15,760—	48,132— 275
Ditto with —	1777—	18,200—	45,990— 1,068
Five years aver. with Mar.	1784—	19,164—	41,606— 1,588

There were imported into Ireland of British manufactured linen, cotton, and silk, according to a		Value of
seven years average, ending with —	1770—	£ 16,784
Ditto ending with ———	1777—	25,208
Ditto 5 years ending with March —	1784—	88,948

The foregoing details by no means exhibit the Irish manufactures of cotton and silk in an increasing state; though some, if not all of the five last years were a good deal lessened by the non-importation agreements of the Irish populace. It is the laudable object of the late proposals to prevent in future all such irregular modes of redress or fluctuation of Trade, by removing present grievances and preventing future ones. We may judge what expectations are formed from the adoption of these proposals, by a fact, which is very well understood on Change, that there are considerable orders for British goods now in the city from Ireland to be executed on the supposition, that the equity of these proposals will ensure their acceptance.

Having thus minutely examined the great branches of the trade with Ireland, without touching the smaller ones, it may be now proper to take a slight but satisfactory view of our general commerce, with Ireland, both before the Irish were allowed to traffick with all the world, and since.

		Value of Exports.	Value of Imports.
There were exported and imported to and from England and Ireland, goods valued, according to a ten year average, ending with	1770	£. 1,818,595	£. 1,032,436
Ditto with	1780	1,897,001	1,412,130
Ditto in	1781	1,782,364	1,433,788
in	1782	1,665,531	1,348,559
in	1783	2,161,815	1,499,229

Now, what is there in this view of a great ſubject, from the Cuſtom-houſe books, that can diſcourage any one? And the foregoing reaſonings and authentic facts, have been thus ſubmitted to the reader's judgement, to enable him to determine how far the manufactures of Ireland can enter into effectual competition with the ſimilar manufactures of Britain, loaded as the Iriſh muſt come to market, with additional charges, to no ſmall amount.

2. It is propoſed in the next place to conſider, how far the foreign trade of both kingdoms is likely to be affected by the late propoſals, were they adopted, as the means of promoting the permanent intereſt of both countries.

We ſhall both ſhorten the enquiry, and more eaſily comprehend the reaſoning, if we throw out of the queſtion every thing which does not belong to it.

The Iriſh may now trade with the Britiſh Plantations in Africa and America, from Lord North's commercial conceſſions. This point is not diſputed. From Mr. Fox's political conceſſions, the Iriſh may regulate and purſue their commerce with foreign powers, as they may think it convenient to themſelves. Of this there can be no doubt. Having in purſuance of this right imported any of the products of Europe, the Iriſh may afterwards export ſuch products to Britain; under a decided conſtruction of the act of navigation, and the eſtabliſhed practice, ſubſequent to ſuch deciſion. Of this then there can be no diſpute. Under Lord North's conceſſions too, the Iriſh may import part of a cargo from the Britiſh Weſt Indies, and ſent forward the other part of it in the ſame ſhip to Britain. Neither is there any heſitation about this practice. What is it then that the Iriſh cannot do under the preſent laws? They cannot it ſeems import directly the produce of Africa and America into Ireland, and ſend it, after being there put on ſhore, to any Britiſh port: This therefore is all that they cannot at preſent lawfully do: And from this reſtriction they would doubtleſs be freed, were the propoſed regulations adopted.

Among the thouſand evils, wherewith the removing of this vexatious reſtraint from a free trade, is ſaid to be pregnant, the principal one is, *That it would overthrow the act of navigation.* Were the Iriſh propoſals to be attended with any ſuch conſequence, it would indeed be a ſerious objection to them. But, in order to determine properly, whether this is a valid objection, or a mere pretence,

tence, let us take two diſtinct views of the navigation act; 1ſt, As its principle and proviſions have a tendency to promote the foreign trade and domeſtic opulence of the people; and 2dly, As its principle and proviſions tend to create many ſhips and ſailors, as a nurſery, from which future navies may be manned.

As to the firſt view of this important ſubject; it need ſcarcely be remarked, that Sir Mathew Decker conſidered the act of navigation as a mere monopoly, which ought to be removed, to make way for a freer trade. For, he inſiſted, that by confining the freights to one ſet of men; namely, Britiſh ſhipping and ſailors, imported goods were neceſſarily ſold dearer, and the products of the country, which were to be ſent out, were in the ſame manner likely to be purchaſed, by the exporter, ſo much cheaper. Doctor Adam Smith, has argued the point nearly in the ſame manner, without ſpeaking ſo bluntly. If foreigners are hindered from coming to ſell, they cannot always, ſays he, afford to come to buy; becauſe if they come without a cargo, they muſt loſe the freight from their own country. By thus diminiſhing the number of ſellers, we thereby leſſen the number of buyers, and may in this manner be obliged not only to buy foreign goods dearer, but to ſell our own cheaper, than if there was a perfect freedom of trade. Yet, as defence, continues this judicious writer, is of more importance than riches, the act of navigation is perhaps the wiſeſt of all the commercial regulations of England; though *it is not favourable to foreign commerce, or to the growth of that opulence which may ariſe from it.*

The reaſonings and authority of theſe able writers were placed in this broad light, in order to abate if poſſible, the confidence of thoſe, who expect that the monopoly of the freight and factorage created by the act of navigation, is to make Britain ſuperlatively rich; and to expoſe the raſhneſs of any man, who can be ſo ill adviſed as vehemently to maintain*: That *The depreciation of landed eſtates, and the ruin of ſtock-holders, and of public credit, would be among the certain conſequences of what?* — of allowing ſubjects to ſend in Britiſh ſhips, any little ſurplus of American products, that may remain after the domeſtic conſumption of Ireland may be ſatisfied. For this can be the ſole effect of the propoſed regulations. The truth then

* See Lord Sheffield on the Iriſh Trade.

is, that the vaſt augmentation of the riches of Britain, during the effluxion of the laſt hundred years, did not ariſe from the act of navigation, but, in ſpite of this law; which was enacted for a quite different and more valuable purpoſe, namely, the naval defence of the country.

But, let us inquire a little more minutely how the propoſed regulation would probably affect the planters, or producers of Weſt India goods, in the firſt place, and the people at large, or the conſumers, in the ſecond place.

The monopoly, by which all the products of the Colonies were reſtrained for ſale by the Britiſh markets, has been always complained of by the planters, becauſe it plainly leſſened the price of their ſugars, and other products, by narrowing their market; and by excluding conſequently a number of buyers. And the planters, as it was natural, conſtantly endeavoured to procure a relaxation of the monopoly, and thereby to augment the number of their cuſtomers. The conſumers were equally injured by the monopoly, whereby they were confined to one ſet of ſuppliers, by the excluſion of foreign ſugars, which neceſſarily raiſed the price. The Weſt India planters had the addreſs to procure, in 1738, a law * for allowing them to ſend their ſugars to every market in Europe, firſt in Britiſh *built* ſhips, and afterwards in Britiſh *owned* ſhips, for a limited time, which will expire in September, 1785. Out of this law Ireland was ſtill excepted. By thus enlarging the markets, and gaining a new ſet of cuſtomers, it was expected, that the value of the commodity would be raiſed. Under this law, the ſugars, which had been ſent to Hamburgh (for example) might be afterwards ſent to Peterſburgh. This too was beneficial for the planter, becauſe he was thereby enabled to try another market.

Now, it would have ſtill been more beneficial to have ſent alſo the ſugars to London, when this great market happened to be the higheſt of all, had the law allowed him to do ſo.

It is worth while to conſider, what would be the effect were we to enlarge the beforementioned law, ſo as to enable the Britiſh planter to bring his ſugars, which he may have ſent to foreign ports, from thence to London in Britiſh ſhips. If we could provide, by whatever means, that foreign ſugars ſhould not mingle with our own, the intereſt of

* 12 Geo. 2. ch. 30 15 G. 2. ch. 33. 18 G. 3. ch. 45.

of the planter would by ſuch a meaſure be promoted by having another chance of ſale. The intereſt of Britiſh conſumers would be ſomething promoted, by having a greater quantity of goods brought to the domeſtic market. And the intereſt of the public would be alſo promoted by the employment of a greater number of Britiſh ſhipping and ſailors. Add to which, that if even *foreign* ſugars were by this means mingled with Britiſh ſugars, the intereſt of the conſumers would be ſtill more promoted, by lowering a little the price of the commodity; and the public by the ſtill greater number of Britiſh ſhips, which would probably in this caſe be employed.

If it was advantageous to the planter to be permitted to ſend his ſugar to every port in Europe, except to thoſe of Ireland; he was ſurely allowed an additional advantage, when the ports of Ireland were alſo opened. If it would be advantageous to the planter, the conſumer and the public, to admit Britiſh ſugars, which had been ſent in Britiſh ſhips to Hamburgh or Peterſburgh to be re-ſhipped in Britiſh ſhips to Britain; it would be equally advantageous to the planter, to conſumers, and the public, to allow Britiſh ſugars to be ſent in Britiſh ſhips from Ireland to Britain; which is the point that was to be proved.

Yet, ſome of the Weſt India planters, though not all of them, have reſolved, that allowing their own ſugars to be re-ſhipped in Britiſh veſſels to Britain, after being firſt landed in Ireland, would enable the Iriſh to ſmuggle French ſugars into Ireland firſt and into Britain afterwards. Were this objection founded in probability it would doubtleſs juſtify the reſolve as to the planters, though the conſumers may ſtill wiſh to get any ſugars at the cheapeſt rate. It ought however to be remembered, that the French government does not wink at the ſending clandeſtinely of ſugars from the Weſt Indies as they allow brandies to be ſent from Dunkirk. We know, that in order to enforce rigorouſly the monopoly of their own ſugars the French have lately ſeized ſome of the veſſels of the American ſtates, which they equally exclude, for attempting a practice that cannot eaſily be concealed. Let us however ſuppoſe, that the French governors were to ſhut their eyes and the French guard-ſhips to retire from their charge, it may be aſked, what the Iriſh ſmuggler can carry to tempt the French planters to ſell their ſugars

ſugars clandeſtinely? Iriſh linens cannot be ſold ſo cheap in the French iſlands as the French linens can, becauſe they are not ſo good. Salted proviſions may be always bought in open market. And conſequently the Iriſh ſmuggler can carry nothing to the French Weſt Indies that would purchaſe half a lading of ſugars, conſidering how much they have lately riſen in their price, and how much delay, riſque, and expence there muſt be in putting them on board. Let us ſuppoſe the ſmuggled cargo ſafely arrived on the Iriſh coaſt, would the ſmuggler meet with no Cuſtom-houſe cutters at ſea and no Cuſtom-houſe officers on ſhore. Here they would meet with Cuſtom-houſe officers as vigilant and faithful, as they are any where to be found, as we might ſuppoſe from the late ſeizure of an Eaſt India ſhip, if the fact were not acknowledged by the whole mercantile world. Whether after all this riſque and trouble the ſmuggler could underſell the fair trader in England, or in Ireland, is a point that ought to be conſidered by both parties.

It ought to be moreover remembered, that all this ſcene of ſmuggling may be acted as the law now ſtands, perhaps more eaſily than if all doubts and obſtructions were removed from legal intercourſe. The act of 12 George III, which is ſuppoſed to prohibit the ſending of ſugars from Ireland, was virtually repealed by Mr. Fox's law of 1782, as far as it was to operate in Ireland, though it continued in force as far as it was to operate in Britain. For any thing therefore, there is in that act (12 George III.) ſugars may be cleared from the Cuſtom-houſe in Ireland; though they cannot be entered in the Cuſtom-houſe in Britain: The ſhip may ſail for Britain; but ſhe cannot come into port: She may hover in the channel, having a legal clearance on board; and ſhe cannot conſequently be ſeized by the cutters. If a law were to be made on purpoſe to furniſh occaſions to the ſmugglers, could any more favourable be given than thoſe already given, by the preſent ſtate of doubt and diſtraction. To remove theſe doubts and diſtractions is one of the propoſed regulations. If ſugars are ſometimes ſmuggled from the French Weſt Indies to the Britiſh by the planters, and afterwards ſhipped as their own; the planters themſelves ought to look to ſuch avaricious practices.

Let us aſſume then, ſince it has been well nigh proved, that to ſmuggle ſo unwieldy and waſteful an article as ſugar, would

would be impoſſible, we may inquire, if in this caſe, it would be contrary to the intereſt of the grower to allow ſuch ſugar to be imported in Britiſh ſhips from Ireland to Britain, after it had been landed in Ireland: If he is a reſident planter he can only diſpoſe of his crop by ſale or conſignment, ſince barter is not practiſed. The Iriſh trader, who knows, that he cannot, after the home market is ſupplied, ſend the ſurplus to the beſt market, cannot afford ſo much for the goods, as if he knew that the vent was altogether free. Every detriment conſequently, which is thrown in the way of him who buys to ſell to the conſumer, is a diſadvantage to the producer. And it muſt ever be for the benefit of the grower to have many markets and various buyers, in order to have the convenience of competition. The planter who does not feel this to be his true intereſt does not know his intereſt.

On the other hand, if the grower inclines to conſign his ſugars, what ought to be his wiſh? to have his inclinations checked by a monopoly, or left free to range in queſt of buyers; to have all the world before him, or to be confined to a ſingle port. The Weſt Indians were once confined to this iſland alone for the ſale of their ſugars. We have read of *the moans of the plantations*, on this account. The Weſt Indians *moaned* till they were allowed to ſend their ſugars almoſt to every market in Europe. They *moan* now, becauſe they are offered another chance for another market. We have read too of a people, who were offered freedom, yet refuſed it.

Leaving the planters to find out their true intereſt in this buſineſs we may be allowed to attend a little to the intereſts of that reſpectable body of men, the Weſt India merchants. Their intereſt in theſe propoſals is ſurely very plain: If the ſugars are ſent (as by law they now may be) to Ireland, and are there ſold to the conſumer, the commiſſion muſt be loſt to the Britiſh merchants: If ſuch ſugars ſhould be thence ſent to the better markets of Britain, the Britiſh merchants muſt neceſſarily get the commiſſions with the other advantages of the conſignment. But it is inſiſted on behalf of theſe very merchants by Lord Sheffield, that this method of getting the conſignment, (for the noble author is not arguing againſt ſending the ſugars directly from the place of their growth to Ireland) would *greatly weaken the ſecurity*, which they have on Weſt India eſtates from money advanced: That is, in other

other words, the giving of the traders another chance to get the produce of the eſtates into their own poſſeſſion is to weaken their ſecurity. But, pray what is this ſame ſecurity? The paper and wax; or the judgment of law upon breach of contract; or laſt, though not leaſt, the *intereſt* of the planter himſelf to continue his correſpondence, in order by his punctuality to engage the merchant to accept his future bills, and to ſend him ſupplies, during every ſeaſon; the *intereſt*, which the planter has to tranſmit his produce to the greateſt market, rather than the ſmalleſt one.

On behalf of the whole nation the noble author objects, that admitting the before-mentioned ſurpluſſes of ſugar from Ireland would deliver up the Weſt India trade to the Iriſh. If we ſift this objection, we ſhall find, that though it means well it means little. The intereſt of the Britiſh people, or conſumers of ſugars, conſiſts in getting them at the cheapeſt rate from any place. The advantage of the planters, or producers, conſiſts, in having the world for their market. And the benefit of the merchant, or middleman between the producers and conſumers, ariſes out of his commiſſion from both parties. The argument, as far as it goes to ſhew, that the Britiſh merchant would probably loſe his commiſſion, had been a good argument againſt Lord North's meaſure, whereby he delivered the ſugars to the Iriſh: But, the Iriſh having actually got poſſeſſion of the ſugars, the noble author's argument comes four years too late: For, it has been plainly ſhewn to be the joint intereſt of planter, merchant, and conſumer, to draw as many Sugars from the Iriſh as they poſſibly can.

Nevertheleſs the propoſed meaſure, (not Lord North's meaſure, or Mr. Fox's meaſure) is to tranſfer (according to the noble author) not only the whole Weſt India trade, but the American trade, and the tobacco trade too. But, by what means? The noble author conveys the whole mercantile capital of Europe to Ireland. In her Weſtern ports the European traders, it ſeems, are to aſſemble; to build ſhips, where there are no wood or iron; to inſtruct the ignorant; to invigorate the indolent; and by a ſingle movement to change the antient manners of a whole people.

But, to be ſerious (if it be poſſible when ſuch arguments are brought forward on ſuch an occaſion;) it may be proper

per once more to remark, that though the mercantile capital both of Britain and Ireland are faſt accumulating; the greateſt capital, ſkill, and diligence muſt cauſe that capital to accumulate by the wideſt ſteps:—That Britain is in actual poſſeſſion of the Weſt India trade, the American trade, and the tobacco trade; of which ſhe can not be deprived, unleſs ſhe ſits down, in ſecurity and idleneſs. But, he knows little of the world who thinks that the affairs of the world can ever ſtand ſtill: mercantile capital muſt either be employed, or it muſt be realized. The Britiſh farmer muſt continue to follow the plow, the weaver muſt drive the ſhuttle, the ſailor muſt ſet the ſail, and the trader muſt actuate all.

In the Weſt India trade England (excluſive of Scotland) has eight hundred veſſels conſtantly employed, whoſe regiſtered tonnage may be ſtated at a hundred thouſand tons, but whoſe real burthen amounts to about one hundred and thirty thouſand tons. When will Ireland poſſeſs ſuch a Weſt India fleet? She cannot buy the ſhips of America, Holland, or Hamburgh, becauſe the act of navigation, being one of her fundamental laws, no more allows her, than it permits Britain, to own ſhips of foreign built. If ſhe builds in Britain ſhe will thereby promote a very valuable manufacture. And if ſhe ſhould build them at home ſhe would by this means withdraw capital from ſome other branch of buſineſs, perhaps more beneficial to her and diſadvantageous to this country. Till Ireland then ſhall have procured ſuch a fleet, by whatever means, Britain muſt enjoy the freights both out and home. It is therefore in vain to ſay, that Ireland can victual and navigate cheaper than Britain, till ſhe has veſſels to victual. It is to as little purpoſe to argue againſt the moſt authentic facts, That her ports lying on the Atlantic Ocean muſt be nearer than thoſe of England to the American coaſt; and that by this means, and the lowneſs of ſailors wages ſhe can perform the Weſt India voyage at lower inſurance and at cheaper freight: It is a well known fact, that the Weſt India freights both out and home are conſtantly regulated by the mutual agreement of the traders and planters at ſatisfactory terms to both parties: It is a fact, that the inſurers regarding the Weſt India riſques as deſireable ones aſk no higher premium either out or home, whether the ſhips call at Cork, or not: It is a fact too, that the freight and inſurance from Cork are the ſame with thoſe from London, whatever may be the greater ſpeculative riſque. The Iriſh

ſhipping cannot therefore enter into competition with the eight hundred ſhips beforementioned, which muſt neceſſarily go out for the ſake of the homeward freights; and muſt therefore often go one half empty; ſince the whole cargoes outwards are not ſo bulky as one half of the cargoes homewards. Who then can ſeriouſly dread the rivalry of the Iriſh in reſpect to freights for ages to come? A little experience will teach the Iriſh, as it has already taught the Britiſh ſhip-owners, that capital cannot be employed in a leſs productive buſineſs, than it would be in owning Weſt-India ſhips.

In ſoliciting conſignments, the Iriſh will find great diſcouragements from being thus excluded from freights, which depend ſo much on intereſt and favour. But, there is in fact, ſuch a chain of connexion, between the planter, merchant, and ſhip-maſter, wherein all their intereſts are bound, that it cannot be broken even by much greater advantages. The planter who has long conſigned his ſugars to his correſpondent in London, or Briſtol, will therefore continue to conſign them ſtill. The planter who reſides in London, will not probably ſend his produce to Dublin for ſale. Nor, will any planter, who knows, that in Ireland the Weſt India products are ſold in ſmall quantities, on ſix months credit, while in Britain they are ſold by the whole cargo, payable in two months, ever prefer that market, where there are the longeſt credits, and the greateſt riſques. It is ſaid, though perhaps with ſome degree of exaggeration, that ſeven-eighths of the Britiſh Weſt Indies belong, either mediately or immediately, to perſons who reſide in Britain. Were this fact true to a much ſmaller extent than is here repreſented, little ſugar would ever be conſigned to Ireland, becauſe few men chooſe to ſend their property out of their ſight, when they may have it to a greater advantage under their daily contemplation. A few cargoes have indeed been conſigned from the Weſt Indies to Ireland, during the laſt four years, by ſpeculative men: But the account of ſales were ſuch, both as to price and payment, as not to countenance many repetitions of ſimilar adventures.

If the propoſed relaxation were granted to the deſires of the Iriſh, it is apparent from the foregoing reaſonings and facts, that Ireland muſt carry on the Weſt India trade, however free, under every diſadvantage. They would have as conſtant competitors the Britiſh traders, who have greater

greater capitals and correſpondence, who have eſtabliſhed connexions and a wider market, and who are already in poſſeſſion of the field of buſineſs. The Iriſh would have a competition both in the Weſt-Indies and Europe, of a more dangerous kind: If the Iriſh, like the merchants of Glaſgow, ſhould be obliged for want of conſignments and orders, to carry on this trade chiefly on their own account, they would have the Engliſh merchants for competitors in every market, as *factors*. And it requires no great knowledge to foretel, whether the *mere merchant*, or the *mere factor* would probably riſe or fall, in carrying on ſuch a traffick. With all theſe diſcouraging proſpects before them, the Iriſh have made a beginning. In their ſmall two decked veſſels, they have ſent to the Weſt Indies proviſions, and other products of paſturage, linen, and ſome leſſer manufactures, to be ſold at the beſt price on their own account. Every one muſt ſee, that this is a very hazardous trade: For, almoſt every article, which the Iriſh can bring, is imported by the planters for the ſupply of their own eſtates; who will only buy of them when it happens that their own ſtores have failed: The proviſions, and other products of paſturage, are liable to a thouſand accidents in a ſultry climate. And the proviſion trade is therefore a moſt precarious trade, as we might infer from reaſon, if we had not experience to guide us.

But, when the Iriſh cargoes are all thus diſpoſed of, another difficulty will immediately occur. The product of their ſales will not be ſufficient to buy more Weſt India goods, conſidering their greater value, than will load the one half of the Iriſh veſſels. They muſt draw bills for the balance that ſhall be wanting; for which they muſt find an indorſer, at the expence of two and a half per cent. and which muſt be drawn on London, where all Weſt India payments are made, or they will be charged two and a half per cent. more as the difference of exchange. Having brought the Weſt India goods, loaded with all theſe diſadvantages, to Ireland, the Iriſh trader will there meet the Britiſh merchants as competitors, who may have brought ſimilar cargoes directly from the Weſt Indies, or indirectly from Britain.

Owing to the difficulties before-mentioned the Iriſh have yet made no great progreſs during the five years freedom of their Weſt India trade; as we may obſerve from the following ſtatement *:

* Iriſh Cuſt. Houſ Accounts.

A comparative account of the ſugar and rum, which were imported into Ireland, during the ſubjoined years, ending the 25th March,

Sugars Muſcavado.

	1781	1782	1783	1784
	cwt.	cwt.	cwt.	cwt.
From the Weſt-Indies	130,056	132,754	99,240	160,083
From Britain	7,384	18,684	33,870	27,492

Rum.

	1781	1782	1783	1784
	gal.	gal.	gal.	gal.
From the Weſt-Indies	69,473	175,053	297,047	153,592
From Britain	197,832	99,219	129,951	944,479

Sugar and rum may be regarded as the repreſentatives of the Weſt-India products for the purpoſe of this compariſon. The importations from Britain were probably ſomewhat affected by the Iriſh diſtractions. It is ſurely reaſonable to infer, from the foregoing facts and arguments, that the importations to Ireland will continue nearly in this ſtate for half a century to come. It is obvious however, that Ireland muſt ſupply her own conſumption, before ſhe can ſmuggle or ſend any ſugars to Britain. And when in the long progreſs of her trade ſhe ſhall have any ſurplus to ſpare ſuch ſugars muſt be ſent to Britain loaded with an additional expence of 3s. 6d. to 4s. per cwt. including Cuſtom-houſe fees, inſurance, freight and factorage.

How far the allowing of the importation of theſe ſurplus ſugars in Britiſh ſhips would give the American commerce to Ireland, is a queſtion which may now be eaſily anſwered. We may all remember the prophecies that were uttered, as to the loſs of that trade from the revolt of the colonies firſt, and from the independence of the United States afterwards. We have all ſeen the race which was run ſoon after that event, by the commercial nations of Europe for the golden prize of the American trade. While the conteſt was yet undecided, it was inſiſted on behalf of the ultimate ſucceſs of Britain: That the ſkill and capital of the Britiſh manufacturers were ſuch as to enable them to give the American traders better pennyworths and longer credits than any other tradeſmen in Europe: And that the Americans,

Americans, being at once regardful of their intereſt and in want of capital, would neceſſarily come to the warehouſe where they could get the beſt and cheapeſt goods, with the longeſt time to pay for them. No one urged theſe and ſimilar reaſonings with more efficacy than Lord Sheffield, in a pamphlet, which gained him ſome praiſe, by entailing on Britain the American trade: It is only to be lamented, that the noble author ſhould have ſo ſoon found cauſe to dock the entail, and to ſettle the American commerce on Ireland. The event of the before-mentioned race is now univerſally known. Britain has engroſſed the American trade to a degree which is almoſt beyond belief. The Spaniſh merchants who engaged in the American trade, have failed. The French American merchants have failed. A few Britiſh merchants have failed. And have the Iriſh had no failures among the traders who engaged in the American commerce?

Experience hath now determined ſeveral doubtful points, in our commercial concerns, that no argument could have done. It was foretold, that the French would, from the revolt, engroſs the whole tobacco of Virginia and Maryland. Yet, though the farmers-general ſent a proper agent to Virginia, who has alſo failed, and though they are ſupported by the public money; they are now buying tobacco in London. And is it likely, that the Iriſh can engroſs the whole tobacco trade, greatly inferior as they are even to the French in opulence and ſkill, activity and addreſs? The Iriſh have not yet ſupplied their own wants: Till they acquire all theſe qualities in a higher degree, they cannot ſupply the wants of others with any foreign product. It is London, which, from the vaſtneſs of her market for every luxurious and every uſeful article of traffick, muſt for ages be the American mart, without ſome accident that no ſagacity can foreſee, or prudence prevent.

But, it is ſtill pertinaciouſly urged, that by granting this boon to the Iriſh, we ſhould relinquiſh *the monopoly* of the plantation trade, which was confined to Britain by the Act of Navigation. This had doubtleſs been an objection, though not a weighty one, to Lord North's conceſſions of the colony trade to Ireland: But, this can be no objection to allowing Britiſh ſubjects to import in Britiſh ſhips from Ireland to Britain ſuch ſurpluſſes of American products as had not been conſumed by her. It was doubted formerly by ſome, whether this monopoly ought to be conſidered as an evil, or a good: That it is an evil rather than a good, has

has been ſhewn very clearly by Dr. Adam Smith. Every monopoly is ſaid to be more favourable to the few, than to the many: By yielding a greater profit to thoſe who are favoured by it than they otherwiſe would gain, the monopoly, it is argued, forces a greater portion of mercantile capital within its operation, than otherwiſe would go there: That by this means, capital is often withdrawn from domeſtic manufactures, or from a neighbouring trade of Europe into a more diſtant commerce, which is leſs under our eye: That of conſequence the monopoly of the plantation trade oppreſſed every other commercial buſineſs which was unconnected with it: And that by theſe operations, the American trade became a diſeaſe in our commercial policy, like thoſe unnatural tumours in the human body, which often occaſion lameneſs and death. The American trade formerly, and the plantation trade now, are certainly very advantageous to this kingdom: It is only doubted whether the *monopoly* of that trade, which is a diſtinct thing, be a deſireable object.

But, let us ſuppoſe, in oppoſition to theſe reaſonings and to that authority, that the monopoly is a good rather than an evil, it may be worth while to enquire, whether Ireland was originally excluded from it by the Act of Navigation. The great object of this famous law was to exclude, alien men and foreign ſhips from trading with our colonies. This regulation was plainly intended for the benefit of every part of the dominions of the crown: The colonies were allowed to trade with each other: Ireland was in the ſame manner admitted by the Act of Navigation * itſelf to the moſt unlimitted freedom of trade, with all the plantations, till afterwards excluded, more by private reſentment † than by public policy. The continental colonies from the epoch to the period of the revolt were allowed to carry ſugar from the Britiſh Weſt-Indies into their own ports and to ſend them from thence to England. From the act of the 23d Charles II. Ireland could not import

* See 12 Cha. ch. 18.

† The revenge of St. John for an affront in Holland is ſaid to have given riſe to the Act of Navigation, during the Commonwealth: It was in the ſame manner, the individual reſentment of the profligate Shaftſbury againſt the virtuous Ormond, who then governed Ireland, that gave riſe to almoſt all the reſtrictions of the Iriſh trade, during Charles IId's reign, ſome of which appear at preſent perfectly ridiculous. [See Hume's Hiſtory of that period.]

port Sugars from the plantations, and conſequently was not permitted to ſend ſugars from her own ports to Britain. The colonies which were thus allowed this right maintained no military eſtabliſhment: Ireland who was denied this right did maintain a military eſtabliſhment, which was applied to the general defence. The colonies, which were thus indulged, have always required an enormous expence to defend them: Ireland, who was thus excluded, has occaſioned no particular expence; at leaſt peaceable Ireland has not, whatever diſtracted Ireland may have done. New Brunſwick and Nova Scotia, may even now re-export Britiſh ſugars to Britain, yet Britain pays their civil liſts. But, Ireland, who pays her own civil liſts and ſupports moreover a great army, is denied this convenience. If this conduct was unequal and unjuſt formerly, can the continuance of a ſimilar conduct be wiſe and equitable now? Thus Ireland was entitled originally to all the benefits of monopoly; and is even now entitled to all the benefits of the monopoly, except the convenience of re-ſhipping Britiſh ſugars in Britiſh ſhips to Britain; the denial of which is not of any great conſequence to this country, whatever it may be to her.

2. From the foregoing conſiderations we are led ſecondly to enquire, whether the propoſed indulgence has any tendency to impugn or weaken that principle of the Navigation Act, which has certainly created ſo many ſhipping and ſeamen, the more valuable, as they belong to ourſelves. If the propoſal were to allow *foreign* ſhips to bring the ſurplus ſugars of Ireland to Britain, the circumſtance of their being foreign ſhips and ſeamen would be a deciſive objection. Were it propoſed to confine the bringing over ſuch ſugars to ſhips, merely Iriſh; which had not been often declared by law, and admitted in fact to be Britiſh veſſels; this circumſtance had created a conſiderable objection. But the ſhipping and ſailors intended by the propoſal, being Britiſh ſhipping and ſailors, without exception, the propoſal can ſurely be liable to no great objection.

If therefore the propoſal ſhould be adopted, and in conſequence thereof many ſurpluſſes ſhould be ſent, more native ſailors ſhould thereby be employed; and the principle of the Act of Navigation would therefore be ſtrengthened: If, on the other hand, it is probable, that few or no ſugars will be ſent from Ireland in half a century, then the object is not worth a conteſt.

The

The trade between the ſiſter kingdoms has grown up in leſs than a century, from the loweſt ſtate of depreſſion, owing to the reſtrictions of the reign of Charles II. to a very high point of magnitude, owing to our having gradually removed thoſe reſtrictions. We ſhall ſee this important truth in a very clear light from the following ſtatement:

	Value of Exports.	Value o Imports.
The amount of the trade between England and Ireland, according to a three years average ending with 1695 was	£. 166,025	81,165
Ditto ending with 1783 was	1,873,236	1,427,191

It plainly required no great number of ſhips to carry on the trade between the ſiſter kingdoms, during King William's reign: And this trade certainly furniſhed very few ſeamen for the royal navy, during King William's wars, when they were ſo much wanted. It is equally apparent, that it muſt have employed many ſhips to tranſport the vaſt cargoes of the years 1781-2-3: And it is equally plain, that the navigation, which was thus created, muſt have furniſhed many ſeamen for the public ſervice, during our late unhappy conteſts. Both the trade and the nurſery ſeem to be a new creation, ſince the beginning of the preſent century. If this creation was ſo much gain to the nation, with a view to its defence, to extend this creation ſtill further, with the ſame moſt important end, muſt be a good to be deſired; and to depreſs that creation, or narrow that nurſery, muſt be an evil to be avoided.

If we have the wiſdom, and the equity to open the ports of Ireland ſtill wider, by granting the little that is now deſired, we ſhall certainly ſtrengthen the principle of the navigation act, by increaſing the number of ſhips, and conſequently, the number of *native* ſeamen; which the Iriſh have been declared by law, and are acknowledged in fact to be. In proportion then as we ſhut the Iriſh ports, we enfeeble the ſalutary principle of the navigation act, by doing that which muſt neceſſarily leſſen the number of ſeamen, who may be moſt eaſily engaged when they are very much wanted.

By

By thus promoting the public ſervice, Briſtol, Liverpool, and Whitehaven have ſurely nothing to fear on the ſubject of freights: For, their great numbers of return ſhips, ſtand a much better chance for employment than any Iriſh ſhips, which may be chartered on purpoſe: The veſſels which muſt neceſſarily return home, can afford to carry at a lower freight, than a veſſel which muſt fit out only for a ſingle voyage: And conſequently the Britiſh ſhip owners muſt overpower the Iriſh in every competition for freights; which muſt neceſſarily augment the number of Britiſh ſhips, without diminiſhing the actual number of Iriſh.

On the other hand, were the re-ſhipping of ſugars, as hath been propoſed, to augment the number of ſeamen in the ports of Ireland, without diminiſhing the number of veſſels in the ports of England, becauſe the preſent trade would probably continue as to them, while the advantage in the competition ſhall continue, nothing would ſurely tend ſo much to promote the public ſervice, during our wars, as having a great number of ſailors, who are bound to ſerve, in the ports of Limerick and Cork, Waterford and Dublin: For theſe ports being nearer to Plymouth and Portſmouth, than Liverpool or Lancaſter, Whitehaven, or Greenock, the ſupernumerary ſailors of the Iriſh ports beforementioned could be more conveniently commanded than from the more diſtant Britiſh ports. The ſame obſervation equally applies to the whole navigation between the ſiſter kingdoms, as compared with longer voyages. In ſhort voyages the ſailors often return into port, and may therefore often be had: In more diſtant voyages the ſeamen ſeldom return, and conſequently can ſeldom be engaged in the public ſervice, when this ſervice may very much require their aid.

It was with a view to the uſefulneſs of theſe repeated voyages, between neighbouring harbours, that the navigation act excluded by an expreſs clauſe, alien ſhips and ſailors from carrying any merchandize from one port to another, in England and Ireland, or from theſe kingdoms to the circumjacent Britiſh Iſlands. The navigation act then conſidered the home trade of Ireland as part of the coaſt trade of England, which has been ſo carefully preſerved as the moſt valuable nurſery for ſeamen. And indeed what can the whole navigation between the ſiſter kingdoms be deemed, but a coaſt trade, which ought to

be extended by every rational meaſure that can be propoſed or thought of. Foreigners were excluded too from the trade of the Colonies upon the principle *of keeping up a firmer connexion between the parent country and them.* Let us hope, that by granting the enlargement of navigation, which is now deſired by the Iriſh, it may be the efficacious means of ſtrengthening the union between the ſiſter kingdoms, which is ſo much for the intereſt and happineſs of both.

3. From conſiderations with regard to the naval ſtrength of the empire, it isproper to inquire briefly, in the third place, as to the queſtion, how far the public burdens of this country would be lightened at preſent, or leſſened in future, were the Iriſh propoſals adopted.

The revenue of every country is divided in modern times, into two kinds; 1ſt, the income of every individual ſeparately, from whatever means: 2dly, the income of all the individuals collectively, which is called the public revenue, on the income of the ſtate. The private revenue of no country on earth ever accumulated faſter than the private revenue of this kingdom, during the laſt hundred years, which continues to accumulate abundantly at this moment. But, the public revenue, however great and productive it may be under late management, is depreſſed by many debts, funded and unfunded. It is apparent therefore, that the wiſdom of our counſels ought to be chiefly occupied in ſtrengthening the public revenue, which is thus feeble; leaving private incomes which are thus productive to the care of individuals, who are entitled to general protection, without the particular interference of the ſtate.

It is to be lamented, how often the ſpirit of the people is directed to improper objects. They have been well nigh ruined, in their public revenue, by being induced to clamour for commercial advantages. We were ſo abſurd as to ſettle colonies for the ſake of getting a nation of cuſtomers. We have ſpent hundreds of millions to enlarge and defend diſtant dominions to enjoy thoſe commercial advantages, which experience hath ſhewn are beſt enjoyed without any public expence. Yet, the ſame man, who by his miſconduct and miſtakes, has almoſt beggared his country, in purſuit of the phantom of commercial advantages, continues to inſiſt, that we ought to riſque our all, in purſuit of commercial advantages.

While

While this nation conſtantly graſped at a ſhadow, almoſt every foreign power has been acquiring provinces which have yielded *public* revenue. But what has Britain gained even from her moſt ſucceſsful wars? ſhe acquired diſtant deſerts which were diſadvantageous to this as an induſtrious and mercantile country, in two reſpects; 1ſt. Inſtead of yielding *public* revenue they required *public* ſupport at no ſmall expence for civil and military eſtabliſhments; 2dly, Commercial capital was conſtantly withdrawn from domeſtic induſtry, wherein it was employed to the greateſt advantage, to cultivate deſerts beyond the ocean, without adequate returns. With our ſad experience and preſent knowledge we may eaſily determine the queſtion, whether we ought to accept of any diſtant iſland, or country, however large, were it offered without any equivalent? For, we have ſeen, that it would require a civil liſt or government to be paid from the public revenue, which cannot be ſpared; and that it would drain the people of the mercantile capital which now gives employment to every induſtrious individual.

On the other hand, Ireland is directly the reverſe of ſuch an iſland, inhabited as Ireland already is, by a numerous people, brave, active and generous; who, at the annual expence of a million, ſupport a great civil and military eſtabliſhment; and who, without any apparent diminution of our capitals, are our yearly cuſtomers to the amount of nearly two millions. In ſuperaddition to theſe great advantages, which ought to be regarded as no ſmall equivalents for commercial benefits, Ireland propoſes to appropriate the ſurpluſſes of the hereditary revenue, as a fund for the more general purpoſe of protecting the Empire.

We ought to inquire into the nature and extent of this revenue before we determine, whether it is worth our acceptance. It conſiſts then of a Cuſtom-houſe duty, outwards and inwards, of an inland and inward exciſe; and of a tax, called hearth-money. It is obvious, that theſe taxes are of ſuch a nature as to have increaſed and to continue to increaſe with the populouſneſs, the induſtry, the trade, and opulence of the country. We have already ſeen how vaſtly the trade of Ireland has grown ſince the Revolution in 1688. And from the following ſtatement we may have a very diſtinct view of the increaſe of the hereditary revenue from that æra to the preſent time:

This revenue produced then, according to a five years average, ending with	1687	£.231,780
Ditto ending with - - -	1734	300,332
Ditto ending with - - -	1753	417,000
A ſeven years average ending with -	1770	545,422
Ditto ending with	1777	543,818
The year ending with Lady Day	1784	659,000

A real ſtateſman would deſire no better document than this to judge of the progreſs in population, diligence, traffick, and wealth of any people. A real ſtateſman when he conſidered from what funds this increaſing revenue aroſe and how faſt it had augmented during a century of oppreſſion, would eaſily determine with regard to the rapidity wherewith the ſame revenue muſt hereafter increaſe from the epoch of the freedom of Ireland, both commercial and political.

It is a curious fact in the hiſtory of our parties and debts, that when Walpole *eſtabliſhed the ſinking fund*, it became immediately the ſubject of ridicule to the faſhionable orators and wits of the times. Yet, every one knows, that the ſinking fund which when created in 1717 did not yield half ſo great a ſum as the hereditary revenue of Ireland, produced in 1781 rather more than three million, till it was almoſt diſſipated by the unproductive taxes of a great financier, for which it was ſecurity. Ridicule therefore is not always the teſt of truth.

He muſt indeed have little wit and leſs wiſdom, who can ſuppoſe, that the hereditary revenue, whatever may be its prodnce, is the only public income, which Ireland contributes for defraying the expence of defending the empire, of which Ireland forms ſo great a part. Ireland maintains as great a land army as Britain does. The military eſtabliſhments of the ſiſter kingdoms form the military defence of each other. One Generaliſſimo commands both, who may direct the operations of both for the protection of each. If Ireland maintained fewer troops, Britain muſt maintain more: If Ireland ſupported none, Britain muſt double hers. The reduction of military eſtabliſhments of every kind is in the preſent ſtate of the revenue of Britain perhaps the beſt œconomy. If Ireland, by maintaining her military eſtabliſhment to the full extent, facilitates this reduction and œconomy

in

in favour of Britain ſhe thereby contributes poſitive income. In this manner do foreign powers calculate the conjoint forces of the ſiſter kingdoms. It can never be prudent in either to convince the world, by unreaſonable deſires on either ſide, that we are a divided people, whoſe armies are ſeparate, and whoſe intereſts are diſtinct.

We all remember how much it has been regretted, that the Congreſs petition, which was delivered by Mr. Penn, was not received and conſidered as the beginning of reconcilement. But, the authority of the Congreſs was diſputed by ſome, and their terms were regarded by many as deſignedly general and ſtudiouſly ſubtle. On the other hand, the Iriſh propoſals come from the only power which could legally ſend them; and theſe propoſals are detailed into ſuch diſtinct reſolutions, that their meaning is obvious and their purpoſe s plainly avowed. Let us not have it to lament hereafter, that we oppoſed ſuch propoſals captiouſly, much leſs that we rejected them haſtily.

Whoever recollects what diſtraction prevailed in Ireland only a twelvemonth ago, and compares them with the preſent repoſe, muſt be of opinion, that much has been ſkilfully done. To obtain ſuch propoſals, from ſuch an authrity, with the declared intention of finally ſettling the commercial affairs of the ſiſter kingdoms, on liberal principles of mutual advantage, was doubtleſs to advance many ſteps towards a deſirable object. Let us be cautious how we undo that which has already been done; far leſs how we by any means drive Ireland into freſh diſtractions, in queſt of old remedies, and new pretenſions. It cannot ſurely be the intereſt of any claſs of men among us, to ſee agreements of non-importation again entered into by the Iriſh populace, or protecting duties once more impoſed by the Iriſh parliament. The manufactures ought to recollect, how much they were baffled by ſuch agreements before: The merchants would do well to remember, a recent example of commercial connexions of great extent, being wholly cut off by by ſuch aſſociations alone. Every wiſe man muſt be of opinion, that peaceful and induſtrious Ireland is a mine of riches, and a tower of ſtrength to Britain: That diſtracted Ireland would be her weakneſs in war, and her bane in peace. To prevent ſuch apprehenſions in future, theſe propoſals have been

been ſubmitted to parliament, only as part of a plan of ſyſtematic government, which can alone tie the ſiſter kingdoms more cloſely together. The adoption of this plan bids fair to inſure mutual confidence, and laſting good will. The rejection of theſe propoſals would lead to ills that cannot all be foreſeen, but would be all deplored hereafter.

CONSI-

CONSIDERATIONS

RESPECTING THE

Propoſed Arrangements with IRELAND.

THE home market is limitted in every country to the number of its inhabitants: But foreign trade hath the world for its cuſtomer in ſales and purchaſes, where a large capital neceſſarily producing low intereſt at home, enables the exporting merchant of a rich country, to give a longer credit for what he ſells, than the merchant of a poor country can give. Thus circumſtanced, it is unneceſſary to ſay who will have the preference.

In like manner the profits upon what both purchaſe at the ſame rate will be greater, in proportion to the difference of intereſt. Half per cent. will turn the ſcale of commerce; ſuch in that ſingle article, with an addition at leaſt of half per cent. more, will be the comparative ſtate of Great-Britain and Ireland, at their firſt ſetting out, under the propoſed regulations; while, if their returns be at equal periods, one per cent. profit, added at every return to the Britiſh capital, and operating in trade as intereſt upon intereſt, will be in favour of Great-Britain, added to her ſuperior ſkill in manufacture, the general uſe of engines which ſhorten labour, and muſt, when ever generally uſed in Ireland, be purchaſed at a great expence, deducted from her ſmall capital, the poſſeſſion of correſpondence long tried, the habits of being ſupplied with long accuſtomed articles for wear and other purpoſes, or the love of variety, which may now be incomparably better gratified by Britain, connected with the ſolid advantage of a long credit. Theſe are ſome of the circumſtances which muſt be overcome by Ireland, before her proſperity can be an object of appehenſion to her ſiſter kingdom; yet as has been obſerved by the author of a late pamphlet, in countries circumſtanced as theſe are, the richeſt will ever preſerve its ſuperiority.

But if Ireland ſhould gradually increaſe, as we hope ſhe will, and the faſter ſhe grows the better it will be for us; nay, if all the markets of the known world were now ſufficiently ſtocked, France, miſtreſs of a ſmaller capital than

ours

ours in foreign trade, and far from being equal to us in the moſt profitable manufactures, is more valuable than we are by Iriſh rivalſhip.

That the Turkey trade for lower priced cloths, much the moſt valuable branch, becauſe the moſt in demand there, though loſt to us and gained to France, would, in a great meaſure, be ſupported by Ireland, is proved by a well-known fact, that during the prohibition of exporting woollens from thence, the French aſſortments were not only, in a great degree, made of Iriſh wool, manufactured in France, but of cloths ſmuggled from Ireland with the riſk of capture upon them; nor was this the worſt effect of that tyrannical prohibition; France ſtood indebted to it for the firſt riſe of her woollen manufactures, even for her own conſumption. Yet the authors of that cruel meaſure, and the Engliſh manufacturers who urged them to it, foretold it would ſecure to England the woollen trade of the univerſe: So it ſtands recorded in the annals of William III. and ſhould now be peruſed as a warning to the nation and its miniſters, againſt predictions ſuggeſted by ignorant and narrow-minded manufacturers, who conſider Ireland as their ſole competitor, and, with the ſpirit of a villiage ſmith, who ſhut out his neighbouring brother of the anvil, as a foreigner, would in like manner exclude Ireland.

Such is more particularly the ſpirit of that petition againſt admitting her to our market for cottons, while it is known that great quantities are run, particularly from Dieppe, and ſold in London.

This is no ſecret to the Lancaſhire Petitioners, and would furniſh a ſtrong argument for the reduction of duties laid upon their manufacture. But as it would militate ſtill ſtronger in favour of Ireland; the fact, though lately vehemently complained of, is now cautiouſly withheld in ſilence and ſecrecy.

We cannot help here taking notice of the peculiar modeſty of Mr. Peel's propoſition to protect ourſelves againſt the importation of Iriſh cottons, by a duty of thirty-three per cent. which implies a tax to that amount upon the Britiſh wearer of cottons, for the excluſive benefit of Manchester.

March 22, 1785.

Forgery

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Much as SHAKSPEARE has been read of late years, and largely as the admiration and ſtudy of him have been extended, there is ſtill a numerous claſs of men to whom he is imperfectly known. Many of the middling and lower ranks of the inhabitants of this country are either not acquainted with him at all, excepting by name, or have only ſeen a few of his plays, which have accidentally fallen in their way. It is to ſupply the wants of theſe perſons that the preſent Edition is principally undertaken; and it cannot fail of becoming to them a perpetual ſource of entertainment and inſtruction. That they will derive the higheſt entertainment from it, no one can deny; for it does not require any extraordinary degree of knowledge or education to enter into the general ſpirit of SHAKSPEARE. The paſſions he deſcribes are the paſſions which are felt by every human being; and his wit and humour are not local, or confined to the cuſtoms of a particular age, but are ſuch as will give pleaſure at all times, and to men of all ranks, from the higheſt to the loweſt.

But the inſtruction that may be drawn from SHAKSPEARE is equal to the entertainment which his writings afford. He is the greateſt maſter of human nature, and of human life, that, perhaps, ever exiſted; ſo that we cannot peruſe his works without having our underſtandings conſiderably enlarged. Beſides this, he abounds in occaſional maxims and reflections, which are calculated to make a deep impreſſion upon the mind. There is ſcarcely any circumſtance in the common occurrences of the world, on which ſomething may not be found peculiarly applicable in SHAKSPEARE; and at the ſame time, better expreſſed than in any other author. To promote, therefore, knowledge of him, is to contribute to the general improvement.

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to

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London, Feb. 5, 1785.